



A GUIDE FOR ERECTING MAILBOXES ON HIGHWAYS

Prepared by the Task Force for Roadside Safety
of the Standing Committee on Highways
Subcommittee on Design

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American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
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A GUIDE FOR ERECTING MAILBOXES ON HIGHWAYS

INTRODUCTION

There are tens of millions of mailboxes on rural and suburban roads and streets. The design and management problems these mailboxes create for highway agencies are the same or similar to those they have in handling control of access, accommodation of utilities, and the design of bus stops and intersections. Furthermore, there is the added human problem that comes from a mailbox being a link with, if not an extension of, the home or business served by it. The postal patrons may view the mailbox as a part of their domain and resent, even resist, directions concerning their mailbox. Thus, an extra measure of diplomacy and public relations may be needed to effect changes in the design and location of mailbox installations.

Highway safety is the primary reason for a highway agency's becoming involved with mailboxes, which, in some areas, are often the only fixed objects close to the road. Of course, there are also highway maintenance and traffic service considerations, but they are relatively minor in comparison with safety. Because most accident record systems do not isolate accidents associated with mailboxes, there is limited data on these accidents. However, what data there is suggests that possibly 70 to 100 people die annually in the United States in vehicles striking mailboxes where the design of the mailbox or, especially, its support can be shown to have contributed to the severity of the accident. While this number is low, it is significant because it is associated with obviously and unnecessarily hazardous mailbox installations.

The typical single mailbox installation (Figure 1), consisting of a light sheet metal box mounted on a 100 mm x 100 mm wooden post or a 38 mm diameter light gauge pipe, is not a serious threat to motorists, although improvements in typical post-to-box mounting details would further reduce its threat. (See discussion in the "Mailbox Support and Attachment Design" section.) It is the massive structures, such as the masonry columns, railroad rails and ties, tractor wheels, plow blades, concrete filled barrels, etc. (Figure 2), sometimes used to support mailboxes that turn a single mailbox installation into a lethal roadside obstacle that should be eliminated.

The typical grouped or multiple mailbox installation (Figure 3) is also a serious hazard to the motorist who strikes it. This installation consists of two or more posts supporting a horizontal member, usually a timber plank, which supports the group of mailboxes. The horizontal members in these installations are poised at windshield height and when struck, have impaled or decapitated motorists. For safe alternative designs for grouped mailbox installations, see section titled "Mailbox Support and Attachment Design."



Figure 1A. Mailbox with Wooden Post Support



Figure 1B. Mailbox with Steel Post Support

TYPICAL SINGLE MAILBOX INSTALLATIONS

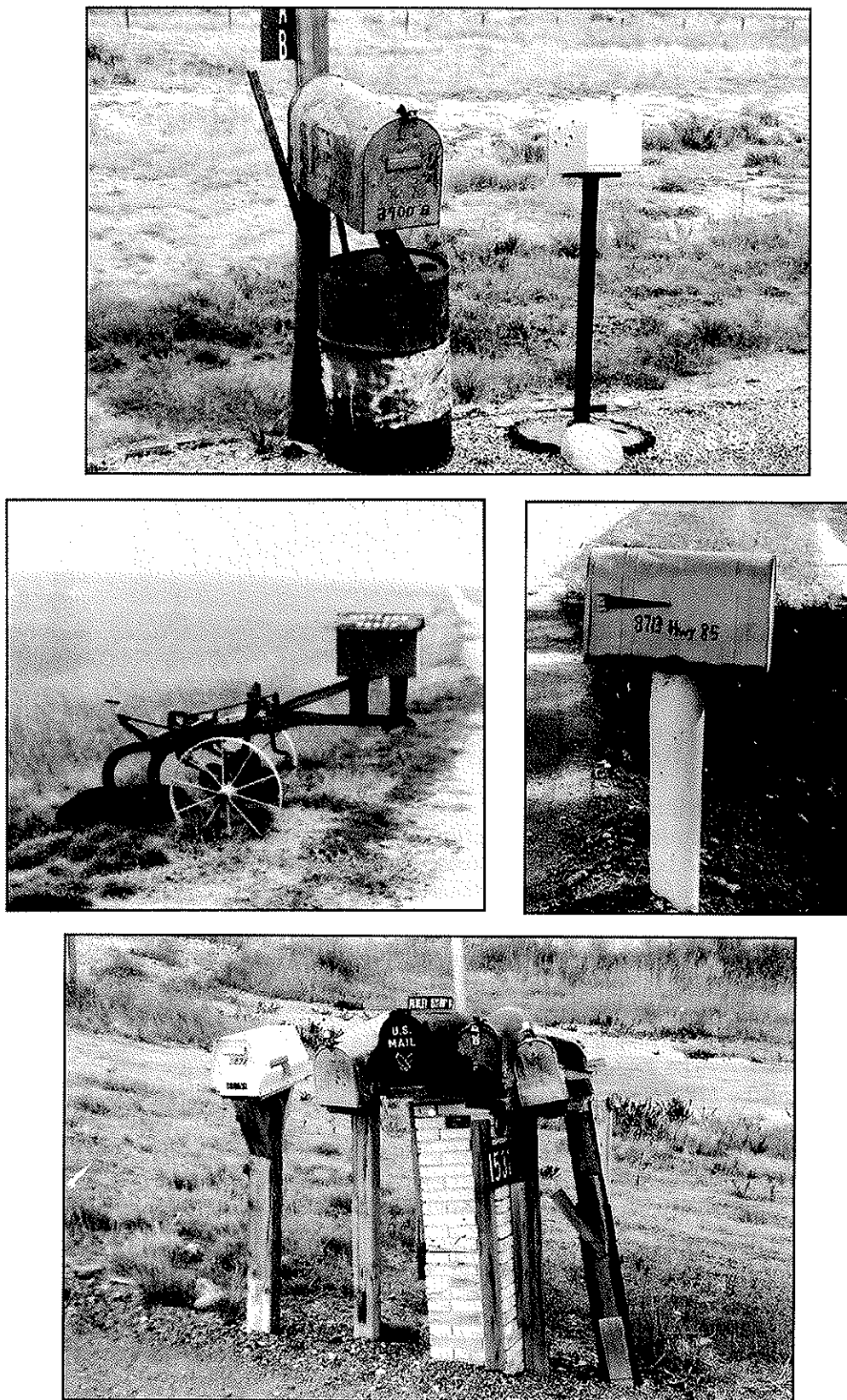


Figure 2

EXAMPLES OF HAZARDOUS SINGLE MAILBOX INSTALLATIONS

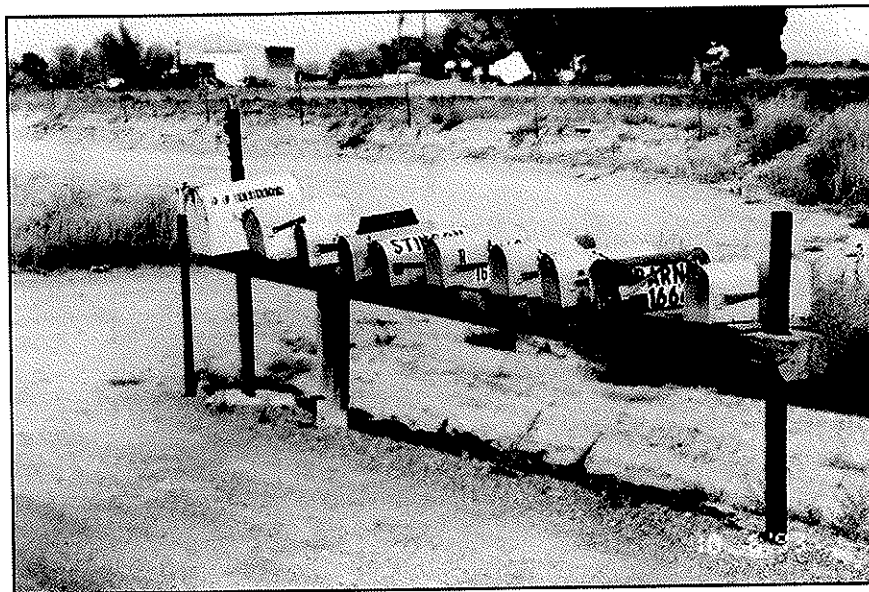


Figure 3

EXAMPLE OF HAZARDOUS MULTIPLE MAILBOX INSTALLATION

Injury from striking a mailbox is not the only risk associated with mailboxes. The mail carrier's maneuvers in collecting and delivering mail and the patron's activities, as pedestrian or motorist, in depositing and collecting mail, create opportunities for traffic conflict and human error. Reducing the number and/or severity of these conflicts is an important objective of this guide.









It is only by banishing mailboxes from our highways that mailbox-related traffic accidents could be eliminated. This is impractical, but to the extent there are identifiable and correctable problems, there is room for improvement. Through cooperation between the highway agencies, the U.S. Postal Service, and the postal patron, improvements in mailbox installation details and, in many instances, locations can be effected with little or no increased cost to the public by simply seeing that good state-of-the-art practices are followed when mailboxes are installed or replaced. (A typical mailbox lasts from 5 to 20 years, depending on service conditions, with the average life being about 10 years. Traditionally, the postal service has had an annual mailbox improvement week. See Appendix C.) Furthermore, when highways are rebuilt or undergo significant upgrading, there may be opportunities to incorporate relatively inexpensive mailbox accommodation improvements.

The general principles and guidelines contained in this publication are also applicable to newspaper delivery boxes and similar devices located along public highways. These guidelines are compatible with the requirements of the U.S. Postal Service (see Appendix D) and are presented in the interest of providing the highest degree of safety practicable for the motoring public, mail carriers, and postal patrons. Highway agencies and localities are encouraged to use these guidelines in developing their own mailbox and newspaper box regulations and installation policies and standards. It should be understood that these are general guidelines and that local conditions, such as legal institutions and practices, population densities, topography, highway characteristics, snowfall, prevailing vehicle characteristics, etc., are factors to consider in developing regulations and standards.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

A. Control Regulations

It is recommended that each highway agency adopt control regulations for the placement of mailboxes and newspaper boxes within rights-of-way of public highways. Correlation of these regulations with those for the granting of driveway entrance permits might be considered. Mailbox and newspaper box control regulations should follow the principles and guidance contained in this document and include the following:

-  a reference to pertinent statutes
-  a statement that all mailbox installations must meet the requirements of the U.S. Postal Service
-  a requirement that all mailbox and newspaper box installations conform to the current policies and standards of the highway agency regarding location, geometry, and structure of such installations
-  information on where one can obtain copies of the current policies and standards
-  a statement on permits, if required
-  a statement on how approval of exceptions may be obtained
-  a description of the highway agency's and the postal patron's responsibilities regarding new installations and regarding replacement installations
-  a description of the distribution of responsibilities and the procedures to be followed in removing unsafe or nonconforming installations

Appendix A contains a model control regulation.

Appendix B is an example of an informative pamphlet on mailbox supports.

B. Mail Stop and Mailbox Location

Mailboxes should be placed for maximum convenience to the patron, consistent with safety considerations for highway traffic, the carrier, and the patron. Consideration should be given to (1) minimum walking distance within the roadway for the patron, (2) available stopping sight distance in advance of the mailbox site (especially troublesome on older roads), and (3) possible restriction to corner sight distance at intersections and driveway entrances. New installations should, where feasible, be located on the far right side of an intersection with a road or driveway entrance.

Boxes should be placed only on the right-hand side of the highway in the direction of travel of the carrier, except on one-way streets where they may be placed on the left-hand side. It is undesirable to require pedestrian travel along the shoulder. However, this may be the preferred solution for distances up to 60 m when compared to alternatives, such as constructing a turnout in a deep cut, placing a mailbox just beyond a sharp crest vertical curve (poor sight distance), or constructing two or more closely spaced turnouts.

The placing of mailboxes along high-speed, high-volume highways should be avoided if other practical locations are available. Mailboxes should not be located where access is from the lanes of an expressway or where access, stopping, or parking is otherwise prohibited by law or regulation. Where there are frontage roads, the abutting property owners may be served by boxes located along the frontage roads. No mailbox should be at a location that would require a patron to cross the lanes of an expressway to deposit or retrieve mail. Where the U.S. Postal Service deems that service is not warranted on both frontage roads, or where there is a frontage road only on one side, patrons not served directly should be accommodated by mailboxes at a suitable and safe location in the vicinity of the crossroad nearest the patron's property.

Placing a mail stop near an intersection will have an effect on the operation of the intersection. The nature and magnitude of this effect depend on traffic speeds and volumes on each of the intersecting roadways, the number of mailboxes at the stop, extent of traffic control, how the stop is located relative to the traffic control, and the distance the stop is from the intersection.

At intersections where one roadway is given the right-of-way and the other is stop controlled, a vehicle at a mail stop on a through roadway approach to the intersection may restrict the view between a vehicle entering the intersection from the right and the through traffic behind the mail stop. A mail stop on the through road on the far side of the crossroad increases the chance the crossroad driver will pull into the path of the vehicle on the through road that is headed for the mail stop. A mail stop in advance of a stop sign creates the potential for a vehicle at the mail stop blocking the view of the stop sign. The least troublesome location for a mail stop at these intersections is adjacent to a crossroad lane leaving the intersection. Nevertheless, there is still a chance that a driver reentering traffic from the mail stop will not see or be seen from a vehicle turning onto the crossroad. Figure 4 shows possible locations of mail stops at a typical rural intersection. Using the mail stop location dimensions in the figure will minimize the effect a stop will have on an intersection's operation and minimize the hazard to persons using the mail stop.

Mailbox heights are usually set to accommodate the mail carrier. Typically, the bottom of the mailbox is located 1 m to 1.2 m above the mail stop surface.

Mailboxes should be located so that a vehicle stopped at a mailbox is clear of the adjacent traveled way. An exception to this principle may be reasonable on low-volume, low-speed streets and roads. But basically, a vehicle stopped at a mailbox should be clear of the traveled ways and the higher the traffic volume or speed, the greater the clearance should be.

Most vehicles stopped at a mailbox will be clear of the traveled way when the mailbox is placed outside a 2.4 m wide usable shoulder or turnout. This position is recommended for most rural highways. For high-volume, high-speed highways, it is recommended that 3 m wide turnouts should be provided where the shoulder is not 3 m wide. Where conditions justify, 3.6 m wide turnouts should be provided. However, it may not be reasonable to require even a 2.4 m shoulder or turnout on very low-volume, low-speed roads or streets. To provide space outside the all-weather surface for opening the mailbox door, it is recommended that the roadside face of a mailbox be set 200 mm

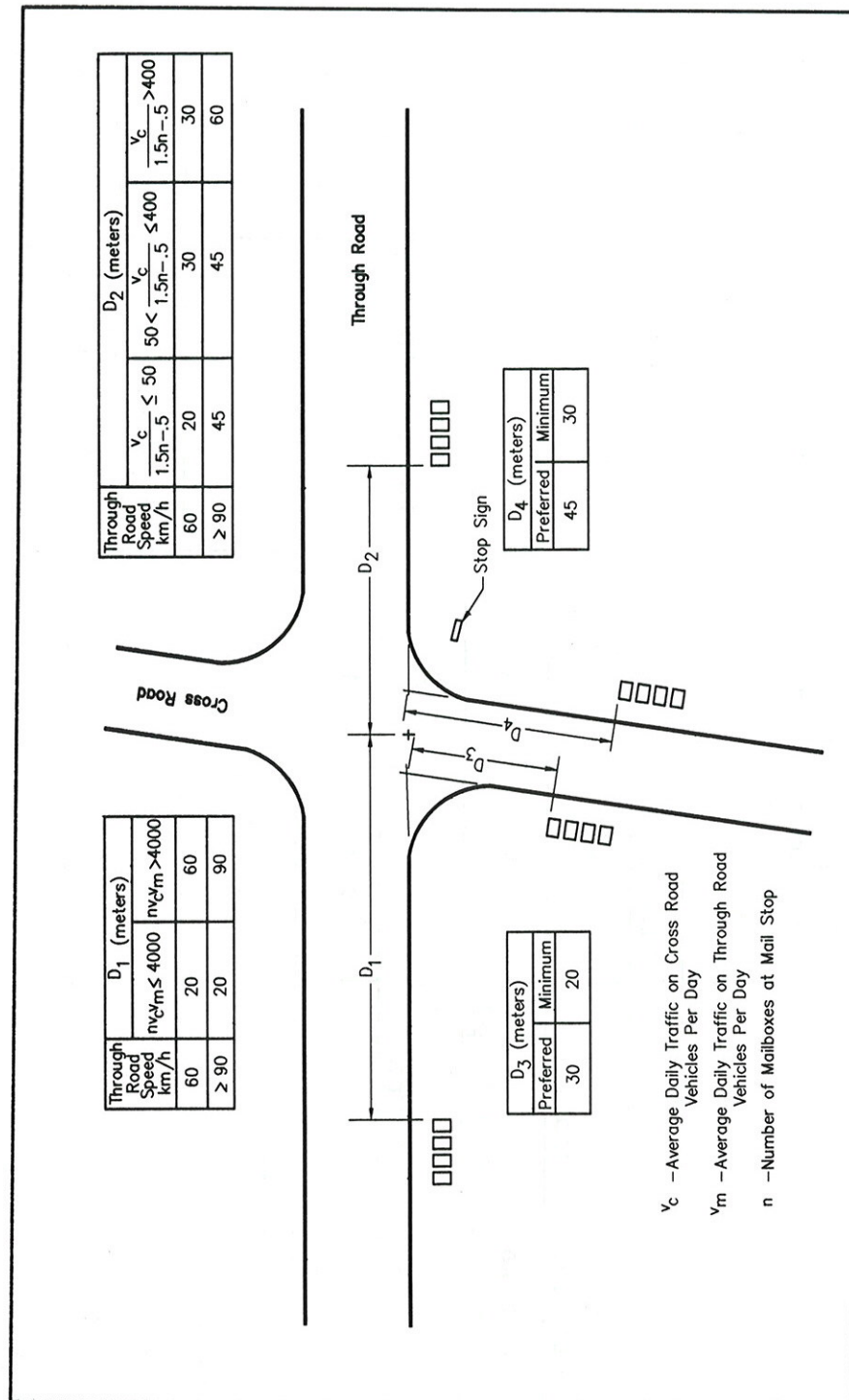


Figure 4
SUGGESTED MINIMUM CLEARANCE DISTANCES TO NEAREST MAILBOX IN MAIL STOPS AT INTERSECTIONS

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR LATERAL PLACEMENT OF MAILBOXES

Table 1

Highway Type and Traffic Conditions	Width of All-Weather Surface of Turnout or Available Shoulder at Mailbox - Meters		Preferred	Minimum	Distance Roadside Face of Mailbox is to be Offset Behind Edge of Turnout or Usable Shoulder - Millimeters
	Preferred	Minimum			
Rural highway ADT over 10,000 vpd	> 3.6	3.0	200 to 300	200*	0
Rural highway ADT = 1,500 to 10,000 vpd	3.6	2.4			
Rural highway ADT = 100 to 1,500 vpd	3.0	2.4			
Rural road ADT under 100 vpd	2.4	1.8			
Residential street without curb or all-weather shoulder	1.8	0	200 to 300 Behind Traffic Face of Curb	150 Behind Traffic Face of Curb	200*
Curbed residential street	Not applicable				

ADT = Average Daily Traffic

vpd = Vehicles Per Day

* If a turnout is provided, this may be reduced to zero.

to 300 mm outside the all-weather surface of the shoulder or turnout. Suggested guidelines for the placement of mailboxes are shown in Table 1. These are based on experience and engineering judgment.

When a mailbox is installed in the vicinity of an existing guardrail, it should, wherever practical, be placed behind the guardrail.

C. Mailbox Turnout Design

Shoulder or turnout widths suitable to safely accommodate vehicles stopped at mailboxes are discussed in the "Mail Stop and Mailbox Location" section and are shown in Table 1.

The surface over which a vehicle is maneuvered to and from a mailbox must be sufficiently stable to support passenger cars stopping regularly during all weather conditions. Where the available shoulder surface strength or width are not sufficient for the purpose, they should be modified to provide a suitable all-weather mailbox turnout. In most instances, adequate surface stabilization can be obtained by the addition of select materials to the in-place soils. A mailbox turnout for grouped mailboxes may require greater stabilization or possibly a surface treatment course to accommodate multiple patron use. Special measures may also be needed where highway traffic conditions encourage hard braking or high acceleration of vehicles in a mailbox turnout.

Slowing a vehicle in traffic, as drivers are usually required to do when entering a mailbox turnout, increases the risk of an accident. The ideal way to minimize this risk is to provide a speed change lane. A wide, surface-treated shoulder can be used for this purpose. Unfortunately, at most mailbox turnout locations, suitable shoulders are not available and it would be far too expensive to provide shoulders or turnouts that would allow all speed change to be accomplished outside the traveled ways. Figure 5 shows a mailbox turnout layout considered appropriate for different traffic conditions.

Figure 5 shows the minimum space needed for maneuvering to a parallel position out of traffic and for returning to traffic. The typical driver would probably slow to about 15 km/h before starting into the low-speed turnout, making it unsuitable for high-speed highways where driver expectancy does not include such slow moving traffic.

Before entering a 2.4 m wide turnout with a 20:1 taper for high-speed traffic similar to that shown in Figure 5, a driver would probably slow to about 50 km/h and would slow considerably more, possibly to as slow as 10 km/h, before clearing the traveled way. While this is not an ideal exit maneuver, for the few stops generated by a single mailbox, it probably would not create an unacceptable hazard on most rural highways.

Increasing the width of the turnout to 3.6 m and maintaining the 20:1 taper rate suggested in Figure 5 might induce a driver using the turnout to enter it at about 70 km/h and to clear the traveled way at about 40 km/h. While this is still not ideal, it should be quite acceptable for all but very few sites. These very few sites might be found on highways operating at high speeds and carrying over 3,000 to 4,000 vehicles per day with a high percentage of vehicles on long trips. For these conditions, consideration should be given to providing shoulders or turnouts at unavoidable mail stops that will provide for greater speed change opportunity outside the traffic stream.

The tapers shown in Figure 5 represent theoretical layouts. It may be more practical to square the ends of the turnout or to provide a stepped layout with the full width of the shoulder strengthened, if required, for the length of the turnout and the shoulder widened to the full width of the turnout for the entire length of the portion of the turnout outside the shoulder width. It may also be simpler to construct a continuous turnout-width shoulder rather than individual turnouts where mailbox turnouts are closely spaced.

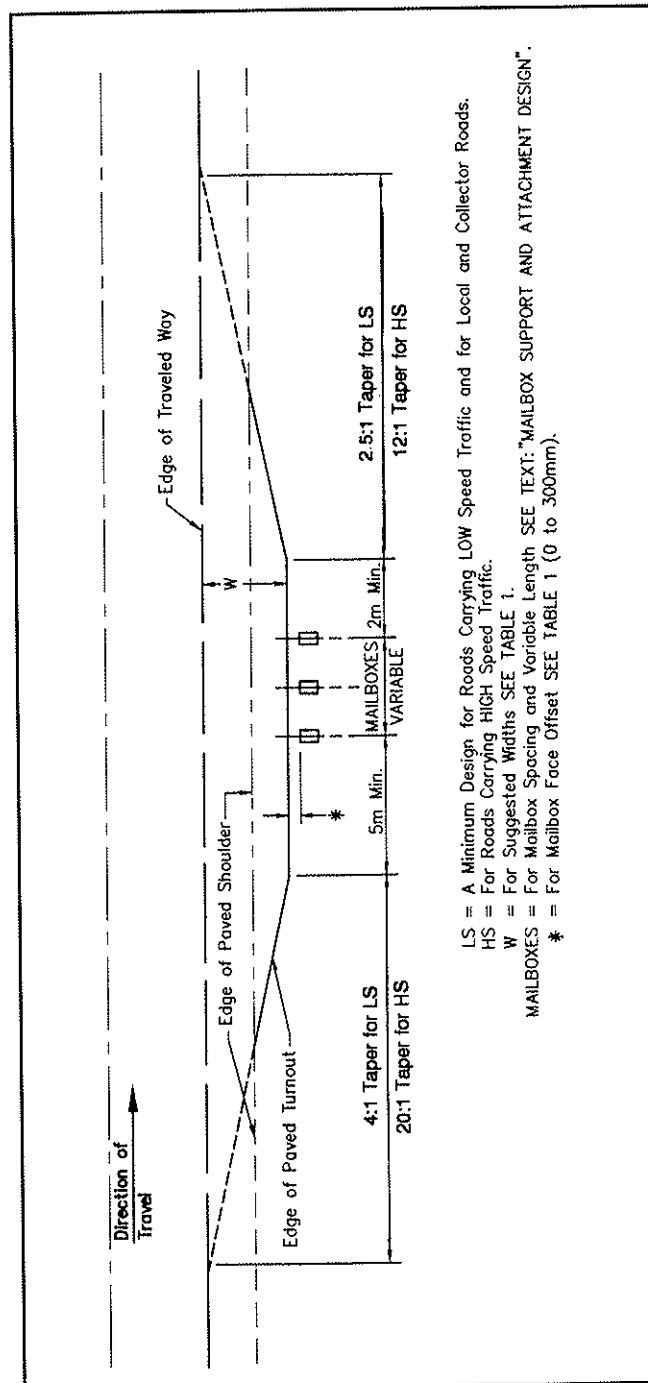


Figure 5
MAILBOX TURNOUT

D. Mailbox Support and Attachment Design

All exposed mailboxes should be firmly attached to supports that yield or break away safely if struck by a vehicle. National Cooperative Highway Research Program Report 350, "Recommended Procedures for the Safety Performance Evaluation of Highway Features," contained performance criteria for mailbox supports when subjected to crash testing with an automobile. These criteria can be summarized as follows:

- ☐ Mailbox supports should, with a minor qualification, be no more substantial than required to resist service loads and reasonably minimize vandalism. Nominal 100 mm x 100 mm square or 100 mm diameter wood posts or 38 mm to 50 mm diameter standard steel or aluminum pipe posts, embedded no more than 600 mm into the ground, are the maximum strength supports that should be considered. Lower strength supports, such as lightweight flanged channel steel posts, have given satisfactory service in most environments. A metal post should not be fitted with an anchor plate. However, an anti-twist device that extends no more than 250 mm below the ground surface is acceptable. The qualification to this criterion minimizing post strength is that for supports such as those made of wood that breaks rather than bends under impact, the support needs sufficient strength to accelerate the box to a speed approaching that of the impacting vehicle so that the chances of the box penetrating the vehicle's windshield are minimized. Test results indicate that the 100 mm x 100 mm square or 100 mm diameter dimensions for wood supports should be both minimum and maximum post dimensions.
- ☐ Mailbox to post attachments should prevent mailboxes from separating from their supports under vehicle impacts. The lighter the mailbox, the easier it will be to meet this criterion or, conversely, given sufficient post attachment strength, the less sensitive the safety of an installation will be to the mass of the mailbox. Figures 6 through 10 show acceptable attachment and support details. The exact support hardware dimensions and design may vary, such as having a two-piece platform bracket, or alternative slot and hole locations. The product must result in a satisfactory attachment of the mailbox to the post, and all components must fit together properly.
- ☐ Multiple mailbox installations must meet the same criteria as do single mailbox installations. This requirement precludes the use of a heavy horizontal support member such as the one shown in Figure 3. Figures 7, 9, and 10 show acceptable multiple mailbox support systems. The use of a series of such installations or of individually supported boxes is acceptable. However, vehicle rollover occurred when a row of eight closely spaced mailboxes individually supported with 3 kg/m channel post supports was crash tested with a small car, impacting off center at high speed. Film from this test and results from other tests suggest that the reason for this performance was a ramping caused by the closely spaced mailboxes piling up. To avoid this problem, it is recommended that mailbox supports be separated a distance at least equal to three-fourths of their heights and preferably their full heights above ground. It is also preferred that multiple mailbox installations be located outside the highway clear zone, if feasible, such as on a service road or minor intersecting road.

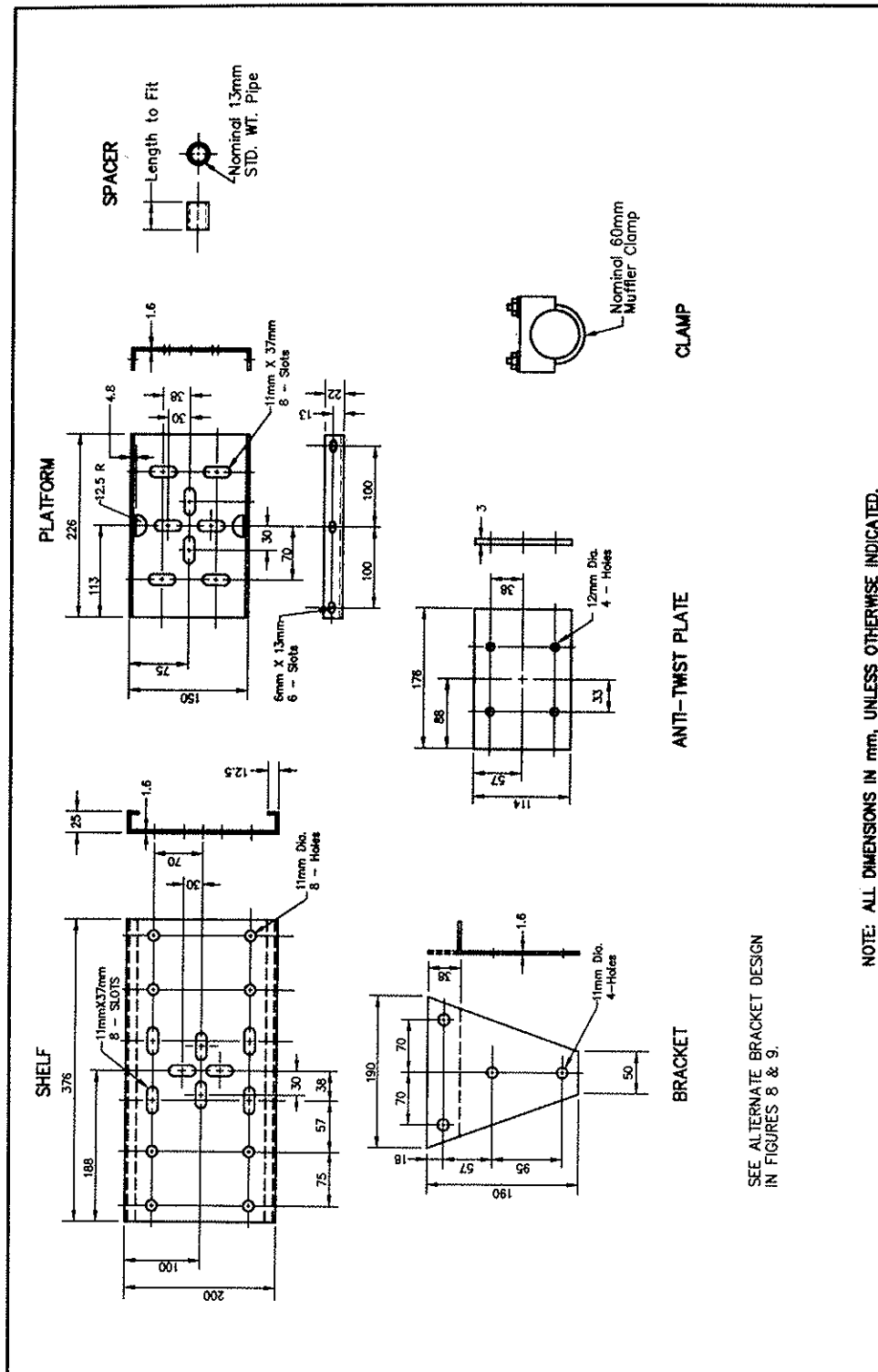


Figure 6
MAILBOX SUPPORT HARDWARE
SERIES A

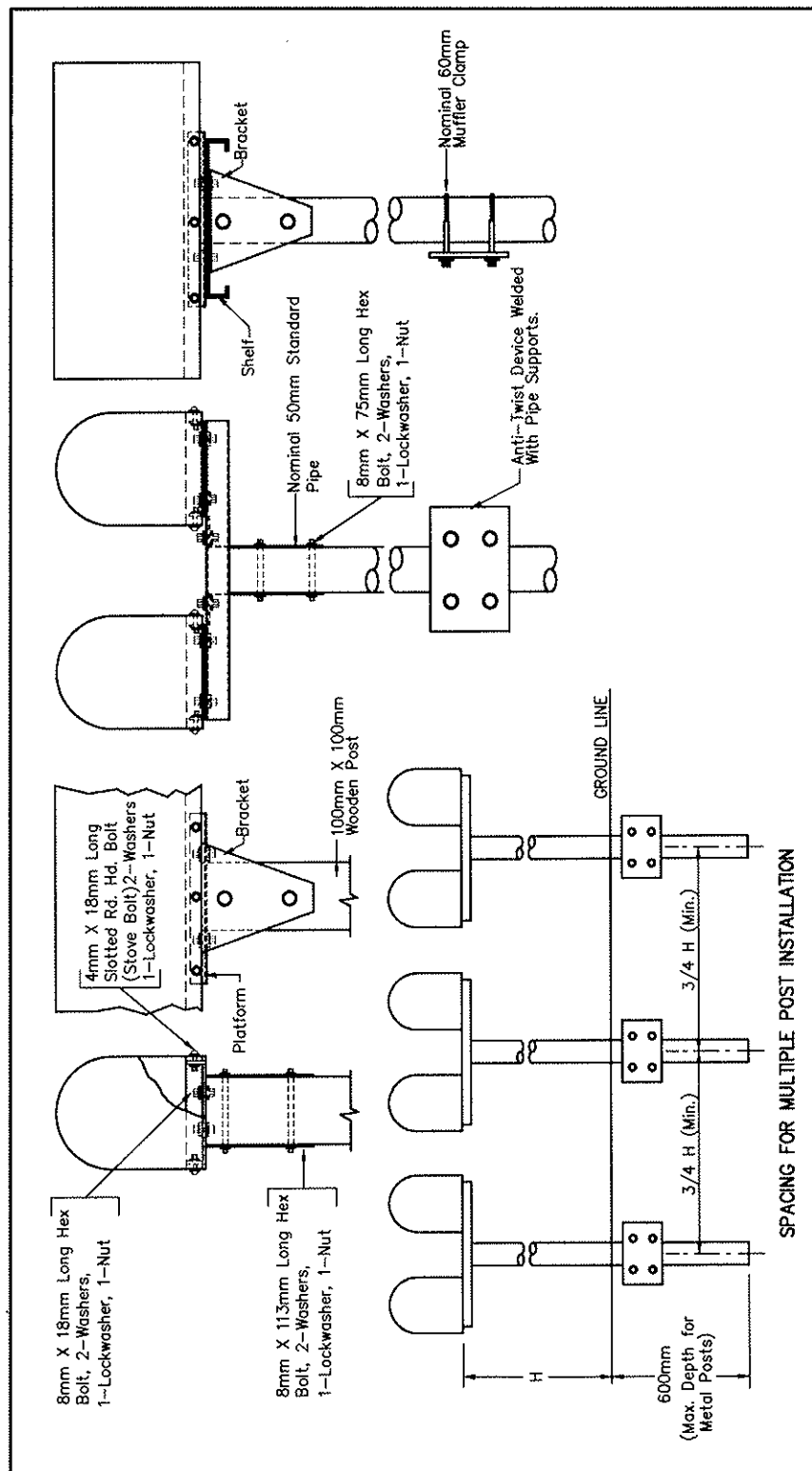


Figure 7
SINGLE AND DOUBLE MAILBOX ASSEMBLIES
SERIES A

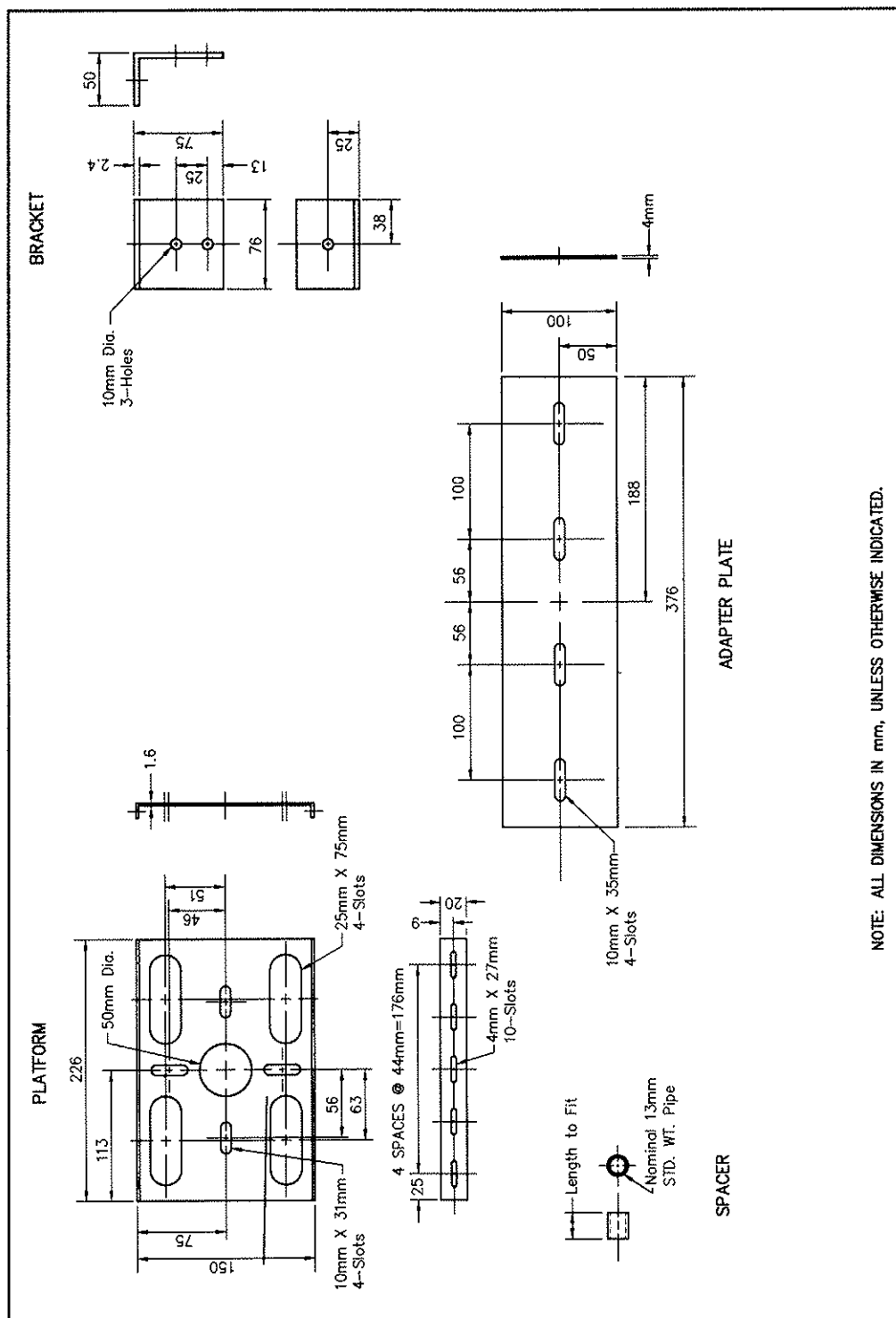


Figure 8
MAILBOX SUPPORT HARDWARE
SERIES B

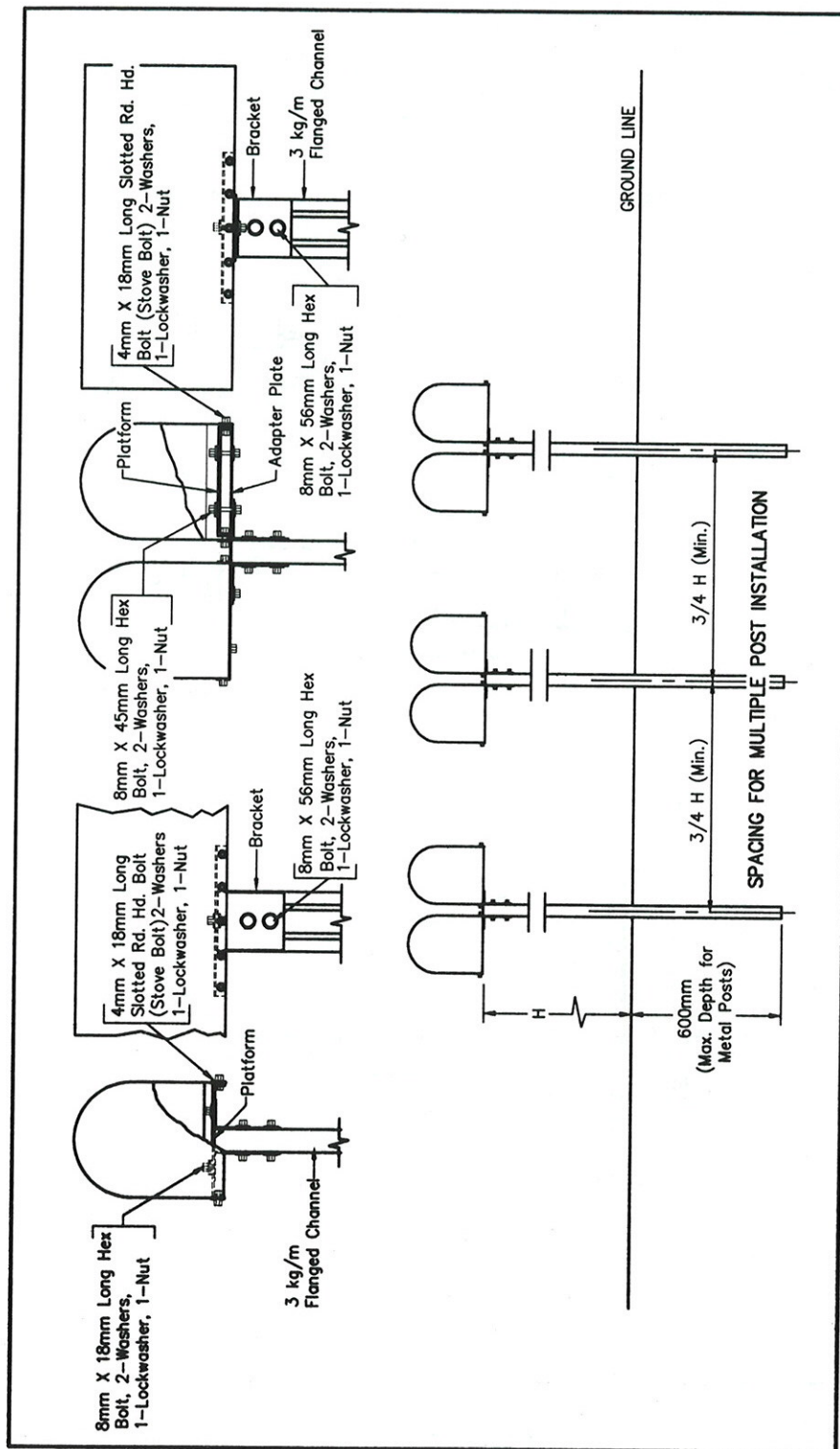


Figure 9
SINGLE AND DOUBLE MAILBOX ASSEMBLIES
SERIES B

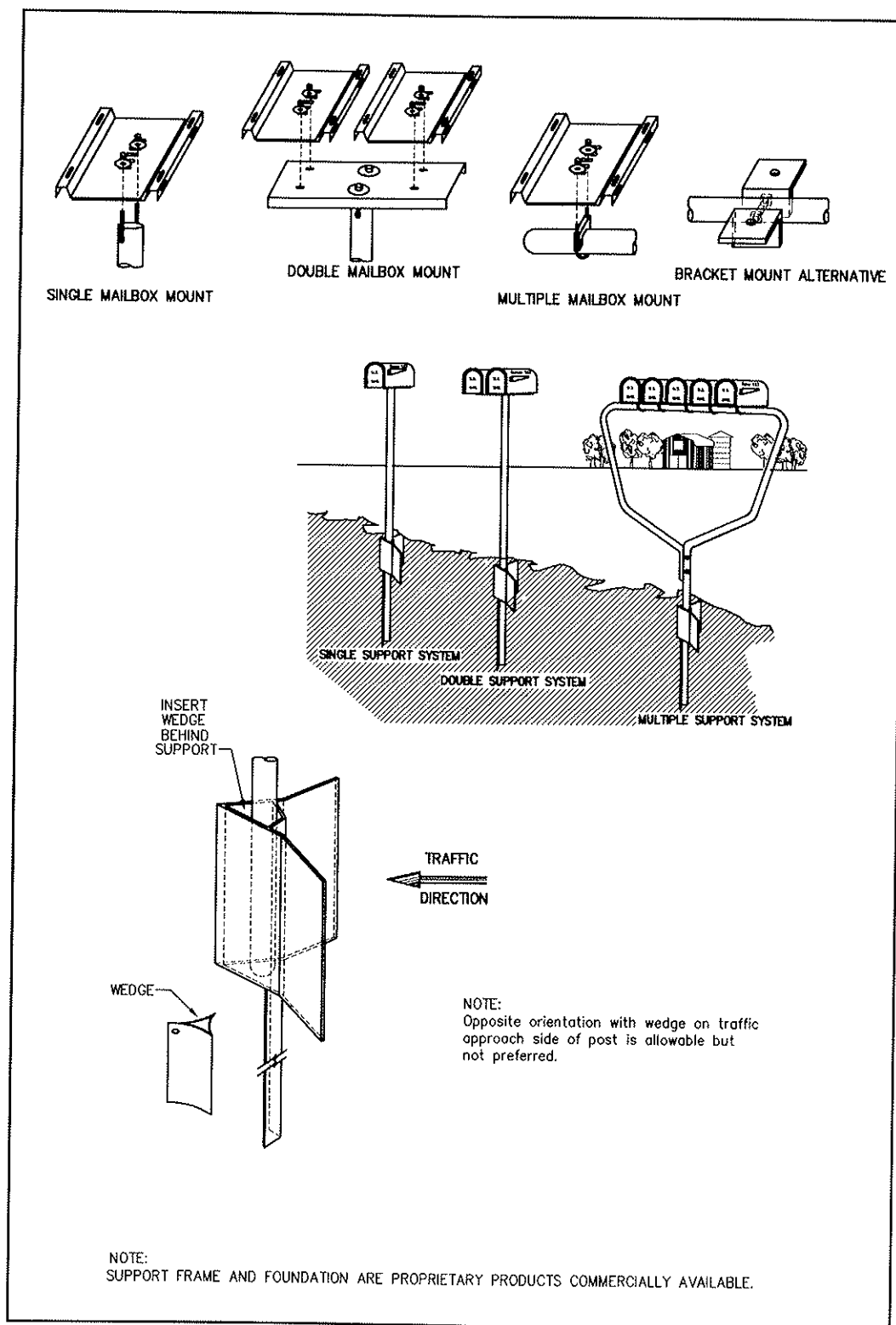
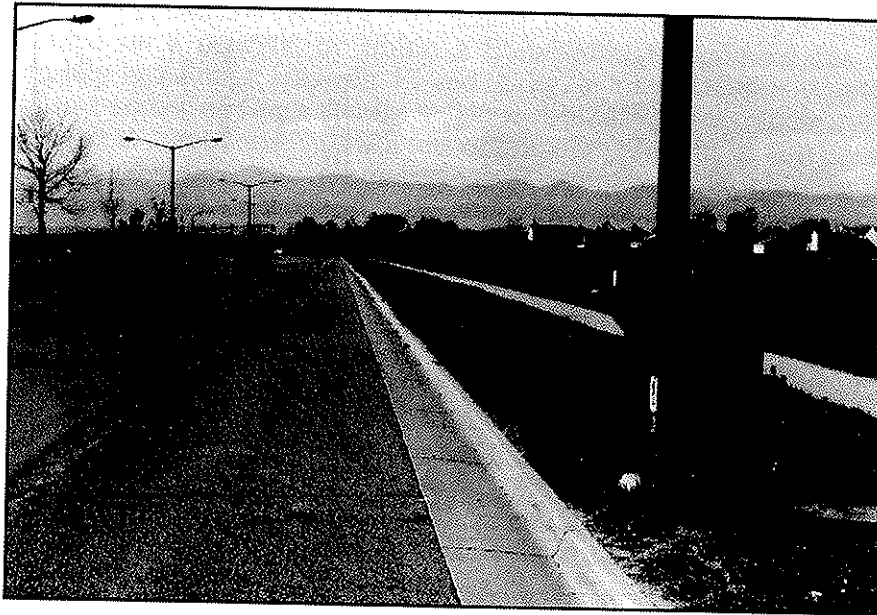


Figure 10
SINGLE AND MULTIPLE MAILBOX ASSEMBLIES
SERIES C



COLLECTION UNIT ADJACENT TO AUXILIARY LANE



NEIGHBORHOOD DELIVERY AND COLLECTION BOX UNITS

Figure 11

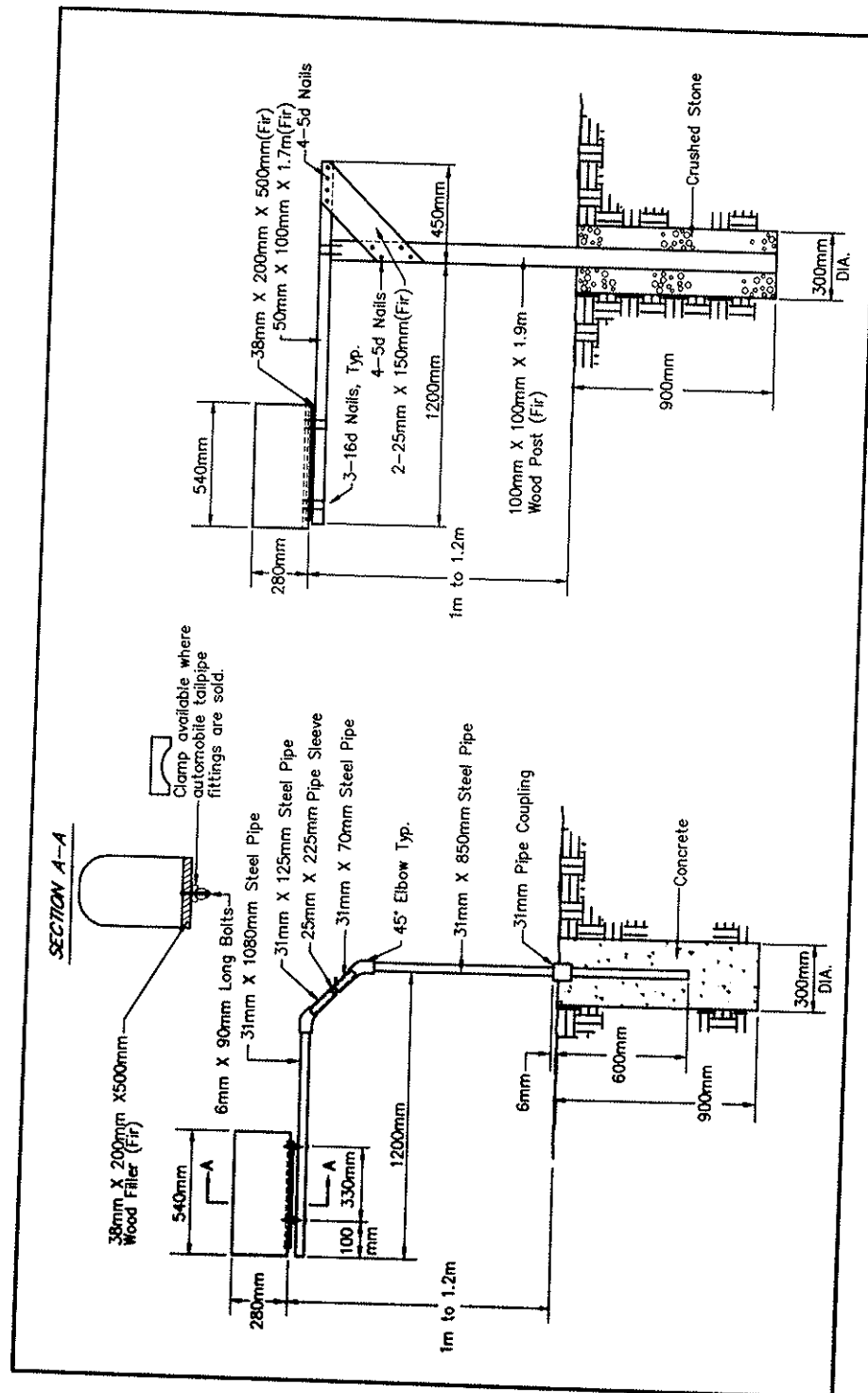


Figure 12
CANTILEVER MAILBOX SUPPORTS

- ☐ The Neighborhood Delivery and Collection Box Units (NDCBU) are a specialized type of multiple mailbox installations (Figure 11) that should be located at sites that provide adequate safety to errant motorists and safe access by postal patrons and carriers. The NDCBU is a cluster of 8 to 16 locked boxes mounted on a pedestal or within a framework, the combination of which generally has a mass between 45 and 90 kg. While NDCBUs usually serve a limited number of single family residences in urban areas, their use has been observed in rural areas. A crash test of one of these units at 100 km/h showed that it failed to meet safety requirements. Therefore, NDCBUs must be located outside the clear area needed for the safe recovery of errant vehicles. Postmasters and their designers responsible for the location of NDCBUs should be instructed to contact local government authorities, including the appropriate highway officials (state, county, township, municipal, etc.) prior to installation to ensure safe location of NDCBUs.

In areas of high snowfall, some highway agencies have found cantilever mailbox supports advantageous. While such designs do permit windshield contact with the box without the vehicle first contacting the support, tests of the designs shown in Figure 12 did not reveal serious consequences. The operational advantage of these supports is that snow can be plowed close to the mailbox without the windrow from the plow pushing the support over.

Lightweight newspaper boxes may be mounted below the mailbox on the mailbox support.

Recently, mailboxes of heavy gauge steel or other substantial materials have been designed and sold as deterrents to vandalism. These massive boxes (over 5 kg) meet Postal Service requirements for minimum size, material durability, ease of access, etc. and are quite resistant to deformation. However, these boxes are potentially hazardous to occupants of errant vehicles regardless of the support used. They should be restricted to use only along low-speed, low-volume streets in residential areas.

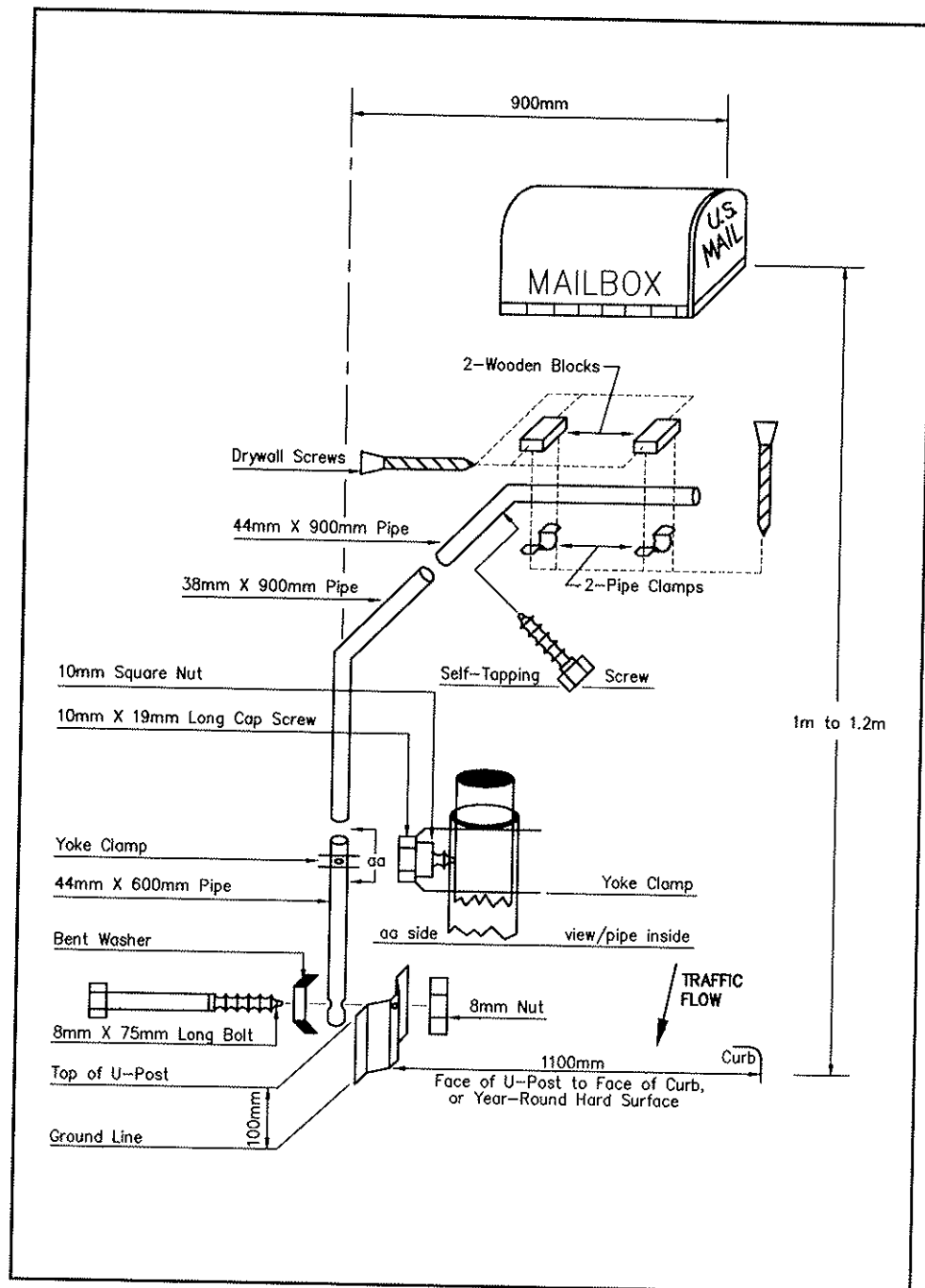


Figure 13

BREAKAWAY CANTILEVER MAILBOX SUPPORT

APPENDIX A

MODEL REGULATION FOR THE ACCOMMODATION OF MAILBOXES AND NEWSPAPER DELIVERY BOXES ON PUBLIC HIGHWAY RIGHTS-OF-WAY

No mailbox or newspaper delivery box (hereafter referred to as mailbox) will be allowed to exist on the Agency's rights-of-way if it interferes with the safety of the traveling public or the function, maintenance, or operation of the highway system. A mailbox installation that does not conform to the provisions of this regulation is an unauthorized encroachment under State Code Section _____.

The location and construction of mailboxes shall conform to the rules and regulations of the U.S. Postal Service as well as to standards established by the Agency. Agency standards for the location and construction of mailboxes are available from:

(Highway Agency Headquarters Address)

A mailbox installation that conforms to the following criteria will be considered acceptable unless in the judgment of the chief engineer of the Agency, the installation interferes with the safety of the traveling public or the function, maintenance, or operation of the highway system.

LOCATION:

- ☐ No mailbox will be permitted where access is obtained from the lanes of a freeway or where access is otherwise prohibited by law or regulation.
- ☐ Mailboxes shall be located on the right-hand side of the roadway in the direction of the delivery route except on one-way streets where they may be placed on the left-hand side. The bottom of the box shall be set at an elevation established by the U.S. Postal Service, usually between 1 m and 1.2 m above the roadway surface. The roadside face of the box shall be offset from the edge of the traveled way a minimum distance of the greater of the following: 2.4 m (where no paved shoulder exists and shoulder cross-slope is 13% or flatter), the width of the all-weather shoulder present plus 200 mm to 300 mm, or the width of an all-weather turnout specified by the Agency plus 200 mm to 300 mm.
- ☐ Exceptions to the lateral placement criteria above will exist on residential streets and certain designated rural roads where the Agency deems it in the public interest to permit lesser clearances or to require greater clearances. On curbed streets, the roadside face of the mailbox shall be set back from the face of curb a distance between 150 mm and 300 mm. On residential streets without curbs or all-weather shoulders and that carry low-traffic volumes operating at low speeds, the roadside face of a mailbox shall be offset between 200 mm to 300 mm behind the edge of pavement. On very low-volume rural roads with

low-operating speeds, the Agency may find it acceptable to offset mailboxes a minimum of 2 m from the traveled ways and under some low-volume, low-speed conditions may find clearances as low as 0.8 m acceptable.

- ☞ Where a mailbox is located at a driveway entrance, it shall be placed on the far side of the driveway in the direction of the delivery route.
- ☞ Where a mailbox is located at an intersecting road, it shall be located a minimum of 30 m beyond the center of the intersecting road in the direction of the delivery route. This distance shall be increased to 60 m when the average daily traffic on the intersecting road exceeds 400 vehicles per day.
- ☞ Where a mailbox is installed in the vicinity of an existing guardrail, it should, wherever practical, be placed behind the guardrail.

STRUCTURE:

- ☞ Mailboxes shall be of light sheet metal or plastic construction conforming to the requirements of the U.S. Postal Service. Newspaper delivery boxes shall be of light sheet metal or plastic construction of minimum dimensions suitable for holding a newspaper.
- ☞ No more than two mailboxes may be mounted on a support structure unless the support structure and mailbox arrangement have been shown to be safe by crash testing. However, lightweight newspaper boxes may be mounted below the mailbox on the side of the mailbox support.
- ☞ Mailbox supports shall not be set in concrete unless the support design has been shown to be safe by crash tests when so installed.
- ☞ A single 100 mm x 100 mm square or 100 mm diameter wooden post or a metal post with a strength no greater than a 50 mm diameter standard strength steel pipe and embedded no more than 600 mm into the ground will be acceptable as a mailbox support. A metal post shall not be fitted with an anchor plate, but it may have an anti-twist device that extends no more than 250 mm below the ground surface.
- ☞ The post-to-box attachment details should be of sufficient strength to prevent the box from separating from the post top if the installation is struck by a vehicle. Figures 7 through 13 on pages 13 to 20 show acceptable attachment details and mailbox support assemblies. The exact support hardware dimensions and design may vary, such as having a two-piece platform bracket, or alternative slot and hole locations. The product must result in a satisfactory attachment of the mailbox to the post, and all components must fit together properly.

- ☐ The minimum spacing between the centers of support posts shall be three-fourths the height of the posts above the groundline.
- ☐ Mailbox support designs not described in this regulation will be acceptable if approved by the chief engineer of the Agency.

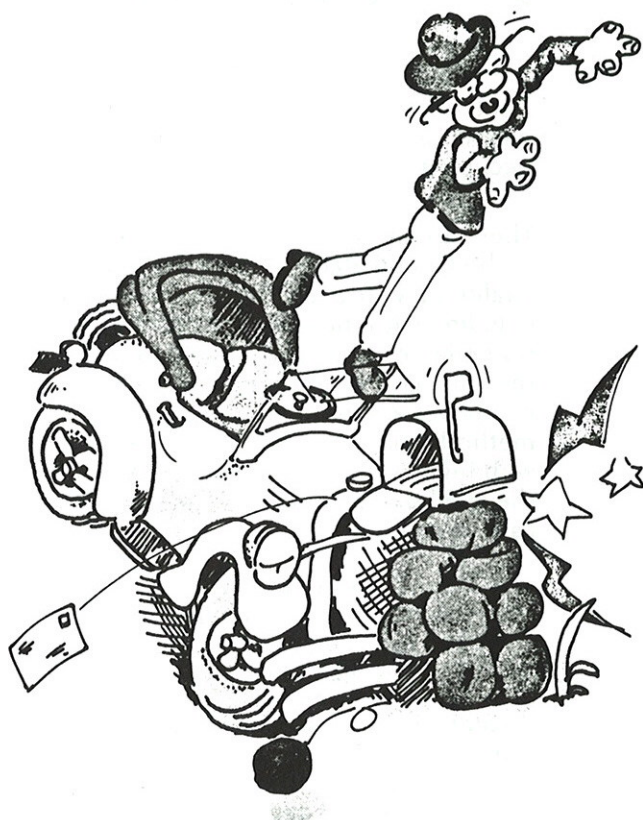
SHOULDER AND PARKING AREA CONSTRUCTION:

- ☐ It will be the responsibility of the postal patron to inform the Agency of any new or existing mailbox installation where shoulder construction is inadequate to permit all-weather vehicular access to the mailbox.

REMOVAL OF NONCONFORMING OR UNSAFE MAILBOXES:

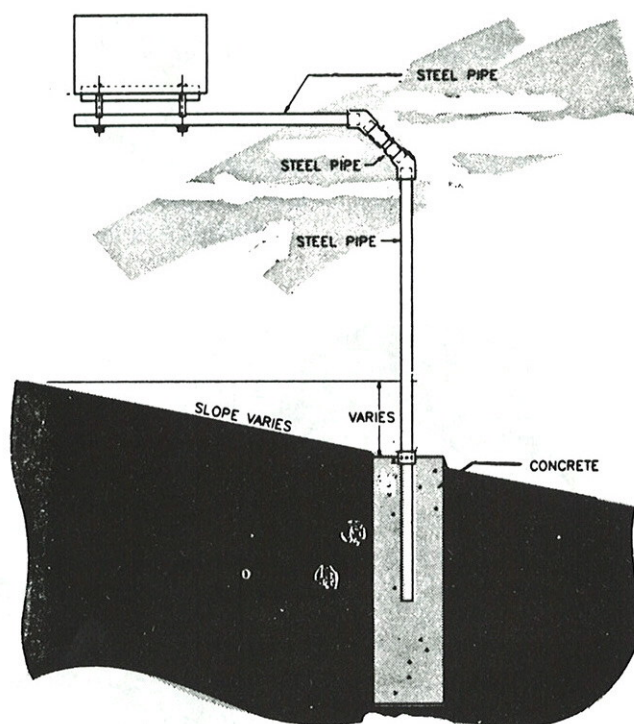
- ☐ Any mailbox that is found to violate the intent of this regulation shall be removed by the postal patron upon notification by the Agency. At the discretion of the Agency, based on an assessment of hazard to the public, the patron will be granted not less than 24 hours nor more than 30 days to remove an unacceptable mailbox. After the specified removal period has expired, the unacceptable mailbox will be removed by the Agency at the postal patron's expense.

Do you own a Roadside Hazard ?



Anything along side a street or highway that is a possible source of damage or injury if struck by an errant vehicle is considered a roadside hazard. Since nearly 50% of _____ fatal traffic accidents involve vehicles that run off the road, mailboxes designed to be aesthetically pleasing may be a "hazard" waiting to be struck.

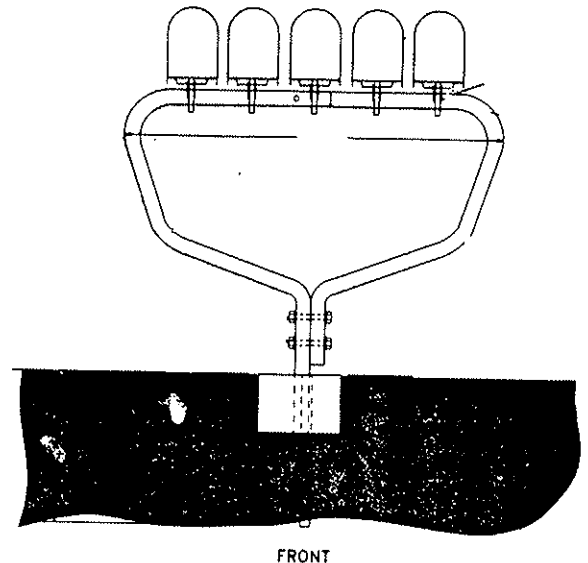
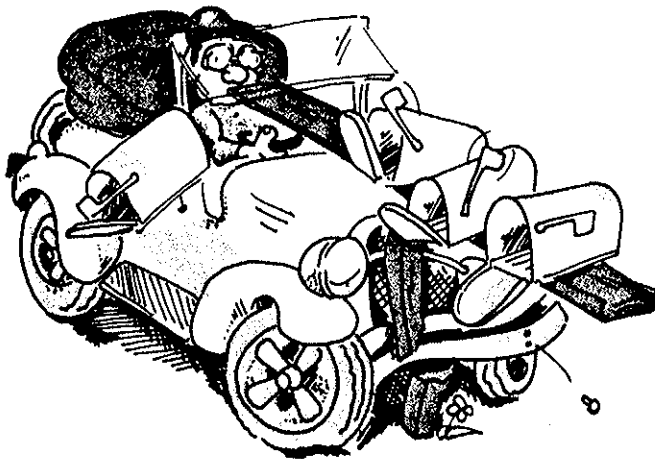
The design of a mailbox and its support have a direct correlation to the damage/injury severity caused by vehicle impact. Massive mailbox supports such as rock columns, plow blades, railroad ties are potentially hazardous to the motorist. Mailbox designs that are shown in this pamphlet are approved by Postal authorities and the Department of Highways and are not considered to be a hazard.



CANTILEVER MAILBOX SUPPORT

Supports that bend are desirable although 100 mm X 100 mm wood post may be used. Boxes should be properly attached so as not to become "missiles" if impacted.

Can you afford a Lawsuit ?



MULTIPLE MAILBOX SUPPORT

Cantilever and multiple mailbox supports eliminate the chance of "spearing" an occupant of a motor vehicle.

There are in excess of 30 Million mailboxes in the United States. As many as 100 fatalities a year occur as a result of vehicles colliding with these mailboxes. The potential for disabling injury and the resulting civil action is reduced when mailboxes are installed using approved methods and materials that are designed with highway safety in mind. Remember, the mailbox owner may be held liable in case of collision.

- Do you want to be responsible for serious injury to others?
- Do you want to be involved in a lengthy liability suit?

If you maintain a dangerous mailbox support adjacent to a public city street or county road, the _____ Department of Highways encourages you to contact us for more detailed information on approved mailbox installations including supports, boxes, and mountings.

APPENDIX C

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

USPS Notice to Rural Route Customers

Each year the U.S. Postal Service designates a Mailbox Improvement Week for customers served by rural delivery routes. During that week, customers on rural routes are encouraged to examine and improve, where necessary, the appearance of their mailboxes.

The purpose of Mailbox Improvement Week is to call attention to the need for providing mail receptacles that are designed to protect the mail from the weather and are neat in appearance, conveniently located, and safe to use. Neat, attractive mailboxes make a significant contribution to the appearance of the countryside and the streets in suburban areas.

Mailboxes that meet these four important requirements contribute to a more efficient delivery operation, and the result is improved service to the entire route. There are two approved styles of boxes: (1) traditional design in three standard sizes (see Exhibit A), and (2) contemporary design (see Exhibit B).

Mailboxes of the approved traditional or contemporary design are required whenever a mailbox is newly installed or an unsuitable receptacle is replaced. Exception: custom-built, rural-type mailboxes may be used if prior approval is given by the postmaster.

Where box numbers are assigned, the box number must be shown on the side of the box visible to the approaching carrier, or on the door where boxes are grouped. Customers are encouraged to group boxes whenever this is practicable, especially at or near crossroads, at service turnouts, or at other places where a considerable number of boxes are located.

In areas where snow removal is a problem, the use of a semi-arch or extended arm type of support is suggested (see Exhibit C). This allows snowplows to sweep near or under boxes without damage to supports and provides easy access to the boxes by carrier and customers.

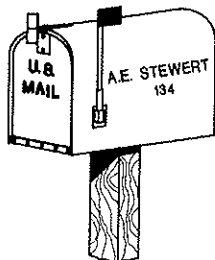


EXHIBIT A

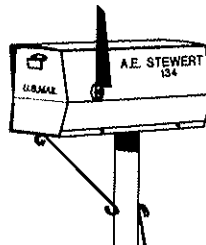


EXHIBIT B

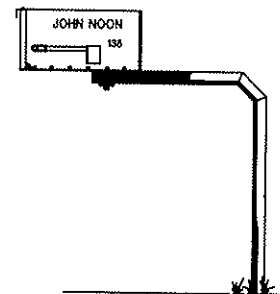


EXHIBIT C

If the use of street names and house numbers has been authorized, the house number should be shown on the mailbox. If the mailbox is located on a street other than the one on which the customer resides, the street name and house number must be inscribed on the box. Police, fire, and rescue personnel often depend on mailbox information to locate customers. In all instances, placing the owner's name on the box is optional. Generally, boxes should be installed with the bottom of the box between 1 meter and 1.2 meters above the roadway. However, due to varying road and curb conditions, and other factors, it is recommended that customers contact the postmaster or carrier prior to initially erecting or replacing their mailbox and support.

Mailboxes on rural routes must be located on the right-hand side of the road in the direction traveled by the carrier. The box must be placed and served to comply with state laws and highway and postal regulations. The carrier must have access without having to leave the vehicle. Supports for mailboxes should be of adequate strength and size to properly support the box.

Reports have been received that some mailbox supports are so massive they are damaging the vehicles and causing serious injuries to people who accidentally strike them. The use of heavy metal posts, concrete posts, and miscellaneous items of farm equipment, such as milk cans filled with concrete, should be avoided. The ideal support is an assembly which, if struck, will bend or fall away from the striking vehicle instead of severely damaging the vehicle and injuring its occupants. Boxes and supports should be kept painted and free from rust.

Your participation and cooperation in Mailbox Improvement Week will be greatly appreciated by your rural carrier and the Postal Service.

POSTMASTER

APPENDIX D

DOMESTIC MAIL MANUAL, USPS

150 Collection and Delivery

151 Mail Receptacles

151.5 Curbside Mailboxes

151.51 Specifications for Manufacturers

151.511 Policy. Manufacturers of all mailboxes designed and manufactured to be erected at the edge of a roadway or curbside of a street and to be served by a carrier from a vehicle on any city, rural, or highway contract route must obtain approval of their products according to U.S. Postal Service Standard 7 (USPS STD-7), *Mailboxes, City and Rural Curbside*. Construction standards and drawings (USPS-STD-7) for guidance in the manufacture of curbside mailboxes may be obtained by writing to Delivery and Customer Services Equipment, Engineering, Research and Development (see Address List in Appendix).

151.512 Dimensions and Styles

- a. **Approved Sizes and Styles.** Three standard sizes and two styles of mailboxes are approved for use on city, rural, and highway contract routes:

Style/Size	Length ¹	Width ¹	Height ¹
T1 and C1 ²	19"	6-1/2"	8-1/2"
T2 and C2	21"	8"	10-1/2"
T3 and C3	23-1/2"	11-1/2"	13-1/2"

¹ Dimensions in approximate inches.

² T = traditional style; C = contemporary style.

- b. **Variances.** Curbside mailboxes may be constructed in any size between the maximum and minimum outside dimensions specified on approved drawings, if the general shape and the proportions of height, width, and length are maintained.

151.513 Application for Approval. Manufacturers must notify USPS Delivery and Customer Equipment by letter that mailboxes are being submitted for approval. To secure approval of a curbside mailbox, manufacturers must submit the following to Delivery and Customer Services Equipment, Engineering, Research and Development (see Address List in Appendix).

- a. **Sample Mailboxes.** No fewer than two complete mailboxes with markings required in paragraph 3.7 of USPS-STD-7 of each style made of exact materials, construction, coating, paint, etc., includ-

ing the panels required by paragraph 3.14.8 of USPS-STD-7, and otherwise identical in every way with the boxes intended to be marketed.

- b. **Instructions.** A copy of the instructions required by paragraph 3.11 of USPS-STD-7.
- c. **Color Samples.** Color samples showing all color schemes to be used.
- d. **Proposed Packaging.** Boxes or packaging of the type proposed for shipping production units.
- e. **Documentation.** Two complete sets of manufacturing drawings and installation instructions, showing that the units submitted meet the requirements of USPS-STD-7. The drawings must be dated, signed, and certified to represent the production units exactly as submitted. The drawings must include enough details to allow the USPS to document and inspect all materials, construction methods, processes, coatings, treatments, finishes, control specifications, parts, and assemblies used in the construction of the units. The USPS may request individual piece parts to verify drawings.

151.514 Modifications During Application Process.

The manufacturer may not make changes to its products or drawings without written notification of and approval from the USPS. Any changes must be submitted with reasons in writing and documented in the revision block of the affected drawings. Two units of each type with the changes incorporated must be submitted for testing and approval. All changes are subject to written approval by the USPS.

151.515 Application Approval

- a. **Authorizing Organization.** The decision to approve or disapprove mailboxes is issued by Engineering, Research and Development (see Address List in Appendix). All correspondence and inquiries must be directed to that office.
- b. **Retention of Drawings and Sample Mailboxes.** The USPS returns one set of manufacturing drawings to the manufacturer, with written notification of approval or disapproval and reasons for disapproval. The drawings are stamped and identified as representing the production unit type if the mailbox is approved. After testing, the USPS keeps approved boxes and disposes of disapproved boxes unless the manufacturer requests their return and pays the shipping costs.

151.516 Production Units

- a. **Construction.** Manufacturers must construct production units in accordance with identified (stamped) drawings and USPS-STD-7. These units must be of the exact materials, construction, coating, workmanship, finish, etc., as the approved units. The USPS reserves the right at any time to examine and retest production units obtained either in the general marketplace or from the manufacturer, and may require the manufacturer to provide units for examination and testing. Failure of these

production units to be manufactured in strict accordance with the approved units, the identified drawings, and the provisions of USPS-STD-7 may result in the rejection of units and the suspension or revocation of the manufacturer's authorization as an approved manufacturer through a decision issued by Engineering, Research and Development.

- b. *Packaging.* Mailboxes and accessories must be packaged in a manner to ensure arrival at destination in satisfactory condition. Boxes must be shipped fully assembled except that the following parts may be removed if necessary to protect them from damage: protruding parts, such as door latching hardware, mounting adapters, and mounting posts or stands. Containers and packaging must comply with the National Motor Freight Classification Rule 222, sections 2 and 3. Boxes must be suitably wrapped or protected and packaged in separate containers to prevent damage to painted surfaces by rubbing against other parts or the internal surfaces of the container.
- c. *Changes.* Manufacturers must receive written approval from the USPS before making any change to the production unit or the identified design drawings. Approval for changes requires resubmission of units for testing and updated drawings for review.

151.517 Marking. All curbside mailboxes must have the following legible inscriptions on the carrier service door: "U.S. MAIL" and "APPROVED BY THE POSTMASTER GENERAL." Manufacturers must mark these inscriptions by embossing on sheet metal, using raised lettering on plastic, or engraving on wood or other materials not suitable for embossing. The name and address of the manufacturer and the month and year of manufacture must also be marked on the box. Manufacturers must either emboss this marking on the rear wall or affix a permanent decal on the inside near the front opening of the box.

151.518 List of Approved Manufacturers. Following is a list of manufacturers of traditional and contemporary style curbside receptacles whose mailboxes are approved by the USPS:

<u>Approved Manufacturers</u>	<u>Mailbox Style/Size</u>
ADD ON'S BY FISCHER PO BOX 746 HUNTLEY IL 60142-0746.....	C1
ARMOR PLATE MAILBOX INC PO BOX 1060 STERLING HEIGHTS MI 48311-1060.....	C1
BACOVA GUILD LTD BACOVA VA 24122-9999.....	C1
MR JERRY BALLINGER 5119 WEST U AVENUE SCHOOLCRAFT MI 49087-9769.....	C1

<u>Approved Manufacturers</u>	<u>Mailbox Style/Size</u>
BEACON PRODUCTS INC 6065A 17TH STREET EAST BRADENTON FL 34203-5002.....	T2, C1, C2, C3
CARMEL WOOD PRODUCTS 24723 UPPER TRAIL CARMEL CA 93923-8343.....	C1
CHICAGO HEIGHTS FURNACE SUPPLY CO INC 94-104 EAST 22ND STREET CHICAGO HEIGHTS IL 60411-4263.....	T1, T2, T3
THE COUNTRY CORNER PO BOX 18 ORCHARD PARK NY 14127-0018.....	C1
DECOR HOUSE PO BOX 1108 TEMPLE TX 76503-1108.....	C1
EZ MAIL CORPORATION 62 CARROLL AVENUE PO BOX 4038 BRIDGEPORT CT 06607-4038.....	T1, C1
INNOVATIVE PLASTICS CORPORATION 400 ROUTE 303 ORANGEBURG NY 10962-1395.....	T2
THE JANZER CORPORATION 98 LINCOLN AVENUE LANGHORNE PA 19047-5238.....	C1
LEIGH A HARROW COMPANY 411 64TH AVENUE COOPERSVILLE MI 49404-1234.....	C1
MACKLANBURG DUNCAN PO BOX 25188 OKLAHOMA CITY OK 73125-0188.....	T1, C1
NORTHWEST METAL PRODUCTS DIVISION OF NOLL MANUFACTURING COMPANY PO BOX 10 KENT WA 98035-0010.....	T1
NORWELL MANUFACTURING COMPANY INC 82 STEVENS STREET EAST TAUNTON MA 02718-1398.....	C1
PARKER MAILBOXES COMPANY 9571 HOKE BRADY ROAD RICHMOND VA 23231-9744.....	C1
PONY EXPRESS MANUFACTURING PO BOX 7916 NASHUA NH 03060-7916.....	C1, C2, C3
SAFE T BOX CORPORATION ROUTE 1 BOX 404 WASHINGTON WV 26181-9743.....	C1
SHELLTER INC PO BOX 30011 INDIANAPOLIS IN 46230-0011.....	T1
THE SOLAR GROUP SOUTHERN GEMINI PO BOX 525 TAYLORSVILLE MS 39168-0525.....	T1, T2, T3, C2

<u>Approved Manufacturers</u>	<u>Mailbox Style/Size</u>
STEEL CITY CORPORATION PO BOX 1227 YOUNGSTOWN OH 44501-1227	T1, T2, T3, C1, C2, C3
TIMELY INDUSTRIES INC 701 MONTROSE AVENUE SOUTH PLAINFIELD NJ 07080-1887	T1, T2, C2
TRAILSIDE MAILBOX INC 1993 STONEHENGE DRIVE LAFAYETTE CO 80026-9115	C1
TUCKEY METAL FABRICATORS PO BOX 720 CARLISLE PA 17013-0720	C1
VEEDERS MAILBOX INC PO BOX 42048 CINCINNATI OH 45242-0048	T1, T2
WOOD QUARTERS INC 7914 RIDGEWOOD DRIVE JENISON MI 49428-7923	C1

- 1—Curbside Box Size No. 1
2—Curbside Box Size No. 2
3—Curbside Box Size No. 3
T—Traditional Curbside Box Style
C—Contemporary Curbside Box Style

151.52 Installation and Use

151.521 Custom-Built Curbside Mailboxes. Postmasters are authorized to approve curbside mailboxes constructed by individuals who, for aesthetic or other reasons, do not want to use an approved manufactured box. The custom-built box must conform generally to the same requirements as approved manufactured boxes relative to the flag, size, strength, and quality of construction.

151.522 Painting and Identification. The USPS prefers that curbside mailboxes and posts or supports be painted white, although other colors may be used. Where box numbers are used, the numbers must be inscribed in contrasting color in neat letters and numerals not less than 1 inch high on the side of the box visible to the carrier's regular approach, or on the door if boxes are grouped. Where street names and house numbers are assigned by local authorities, and the postmaster has authorized use of a street name and house number as a postal address, the house number must be shown on the box. If the box is on a different street from the customer's residence, the street name and house number must be inscribed on the box. Placement of the owner's name on the box is optional. Advertising on boxes or supports is prohibited.

151.523 Posts and Supports. Posts or other supports for curbside mailboxes must be neat and of adequate strength and size. They may not be designed to represent effigies or caricatures that tend to disparage or ridicule any person. The box may be attached to a fixed or movable arm.

151.524 Location. Curbside mailboxes must be placed so that they may be safely and conveniently served by carriers without leaving their conveyances, and must be on the right-hand side of the road in the direction of travel of the carriers in all cases where traffic conditions are such that it would be dangerous for the carriers to drive to the left to reach the boxes, or where their doing so would constitute a violation of traffic laws and regulations. (For exception, see 156.312.) On new rural or highway contract routes, all boxes must be on the right side of the road in the direction of travel by the carrier. Boxes must be placed to conform to state laws and highway regulations. Carriers are subject to the same traffic laws and regulations as are other motorists. Customers must remove obstructions, including vehicles, trash cans, and snow, that make delivery difficult. Generally, customers should install boxes with the bottom of the box at a vertical height of between 3-1/2 and 4 feet from the road surface. However, because of varying road and curb conditions and other factors, the USPS recommends that customers contact the postmaster or carrier before erecting or replacing their mailboxes and supports.

151.525 Grouping. Boxes should be grouped wherever possible, especially at or near crossroads, at service turnouts, or at other places where a considerable number of boxes are presently located.

151.526 More Than One Family. More than one family, but not more than five families, on rural or highway contract routes, may use the same box, if a written notice of agreement, signed by the heads of the families, or by the individuals who want to join in the use of such box, is filed with the postmaster at the distributing office.

151.527 Locks. The use of locks on mailboxes on rural and highway contract routes is not required. If, however, a box is equipped with a lock, the box must have a slot large enough to accommodate the customer's normal daily mail volume. The USPS does not open locked boxes and does not accept keys for this purpose.

151.528 Unstamped Newspapers Curbside mailboxes are to be used for mail only, except that publishers of newspapers regularly mailed as second-class mail may, on Sundays and national holidays only, place copies of the Sunday or holiday issues in the rural and highway contract route boxes of subscribers, with the understanding that copies are removed from the boxes before the next day on which mail deliveries are scheduled.

151.529 Newspaper Receptacles. A receptacle for the delivery of newspapers may be attached to the post of a curbside mailbox used by the USPS, if: no part of the receptacle touches or is attached to or is supported by any part of the mailbox, interferes with the delivery of mail, obstructs the view of the flag, or presents a hazard to the carrier or the carrier's vehicle. The receptacle must not extend beyond the front of the box when the

box door is closed. No advertising may be displayed on the outside of the receptacle, except the name of the publication.

151.53 Nonconforming Mailboxes. Carriers must report to the postmaster any mailboxes not conforming to postal regulations. The postmaster sends Form 4056 to the owners of these boxes, requesting that they remedy the irregularities or defects.

152 Mail Deposit and Collection

152.1 Collection Times. Mail is collected in residential and business sections served by city carriers at times to connect with mail dispatches. Mail is also collected in business sections at frequent intervals to keep boxes from becoming overloaded and to provide an even flow of mail to the post office.

152.2 Ordinary Deposit of Mail

152.21 Post Office Lobby. Letterdrops are provided in lobbies of all post offices for the deposit of mail.

152.22 Collection Boxes. Collection boxes for the deposit of mail are placed at convenient points in areas served by city carriers, at noncity-delivery offices in front of the post office quarters, and in nonpersonnel rural units.

152.23 Rural Boxes. Mail on which postage is paid may be deposited for collection in mailboxes on rural routes.

152.24 Vertical Improved Mail (VIM) Mailrooms. Mail may be deposited in bundle mail drops where provided. Otherwise, it may be left with the carrier on duty when the VIM call window is open.

152.3 Deposit of Mail With Employees. The following types of mail may be handed for dispatch to employees on duty in mobile units or transfer offices and at airport mail facilities:

- a. First-Class Mail on which postage is paid.
- b. Third- or fourth-class mail, presented by representatives of manufacturers or distributors of medicines or serums, when endorsed: "Emergency—This package has been weighed and bears necessary postage. Any additional postage found to be due is guaranteed by sender." Third- and fourth-class mail, except that described, and mail to be sent registered, insured, or COD, is not mailable with the employees identified above.
- c. Unless acceptance is prearranged and previously authorized by the postmaster, only parcels that may be opened for postal inspection in the presence of the mailer to determine mailability of contents may be accepted at airport mail facilities.

152.4 Mailchutes and Receiving Boxes

152.41 Use

152.411 Determination of Installation. Mailing chutes and receiving boxes may be placed, at the expense of the owner, in public buildings, railroad stations, hotels, and business or office buildings of not less than four stories, and apartment houses of not less than 40 residential apartments. Buildings in which receiving boxes are located must be open to the general public, without restrictions, during the hours specified for mail collections. If the owner of a building does not want to install a mailchute and receiving box, a receiving box only may be installed if the postmaster determines it is necessary and approves its installation.

152.412 Purpose. Mailchutes and receiving boxes are intended for the deposit of First-Class Mail and small quantities of single-piece-rate third-class. Bulk-rate mailings of third-class mail may not be deposited in mailchutes and receiving boxes.

152.42 Installation, Specification, and Maintenance. Requests for the installation of mailchutes and receiving boxes must be approved by the postmaster, and he or she must be furnished the contract and specifications for any proposed chute and box. The specifications for mailchutes and maintenance procedures are covered in Publication 16, *Mail Chutes, Receiving Boxes, and Auxiliary Collection Boxes: Regulations and Specifications*.

152.5 Bulk Mailings. Mailings under permit indicia or at bulk rates must be made at times and places designated by the postmaster. These mailings are generally limited to ensure proper acceptance and verification.

152.6 Separation of Mail by Sender. Customers with large mailings should separate them into packages labeled "Local" and "Out of Town." These labels may be obtained from the post office.

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153 Conditions of Delivery

153.1 Delivery, Refusal, and Return

153.11 Conditions. The following conditions govern delivery, refusal, and return:

- a. *Delivery to Addressee.* The addressee may control delivery of his or her mail. In the absence of a contrary order, the mail is delivered as addressed. Mail addressed to several persons may be delivered to any one of them.
- b. *Mail Refused When Offered for Delivery.* The addressee may refuse to accept a piece of mail at the time it is offered for delivery.

- (2) There is a minimum of two mailboxes erected at each mailbox site (there is no maximum limit), and
 - (3) The customers are not required to travel an unreasonable distance to obtain their mail.
- b. *Post Office Box or General Delivery Service.* Post office box or general delivery service may be provided at the nearest postal facility where carrier delivery emanates.

155.3 Requests for Delivery Service. Requests or petitions to establish, change, or extend delivery service must be made to the local postmaster. No formal petition is required. Postmasters forward requests or petitions to establish service to the USPS official designated by the area office, with a statement reporting whether the requirements in 155.1 are met.

155.4 Mail Receptacles

155.41 Obligation of Customer

155.411 Purchase, Installation, and Maintenance. Customers of the carrier delivery service must provide authorized receptacles (see 151.5) or door slots, except for mail receptacles authorized by the USPS to be owned and maintained by the USPS. The purchase, installation, maintenance, and replacement of mail-receptacle equipment used by customers to receive delivery of mail are not the responsibility of the USPS, except that the USPS may authorize neighborhood delivery and collection boxes and parcel lockers to be purchased, installed, maintained, or replaced by the USPS.

155.412 Receptacles Not Required. Business houses are not required to provide mail receptacles or door slots, if they are open and someone is on hand to receive the mail when the carrier calls. If an office building is equipped with an elevator, carriers deliver to individual offices, if they are open when the carriers arrive. If the offices are not open when the carrier arrives, mail receptacles or door slots must be provided.

155.42 Keys to Customer's Private Mail Receptacle. City delivery carriers are prohibited from accepting keys for locks on private mail receptacles, buildings, or offices, except under A.3. of Publication 17, *Apartment House Mail Receptacles—Regulations and Manufacturing Standards*. If city delivery customers place locks on their receptacles, the receptacles must have slots large enough to accommodate their normal daily mail volume so that delivery may be made by the carrier without using a key.

155.43 Door Slot Specifications. The clear rectangular opening in the outside slot plate must be at least 1-1/2 inches wide and 7 inches long. The slot must have a flap, hinged at the top if placed horizontally, and hinged on the side away from the hinge side of the door if placed vertically. When an inside hood is used to

provide greater privacy, the hooded part must not be below the bottom line of the slot in the outside plate if placed horizontally, or beyond the side line of the slot in the outside plate nearest the hinge edge of the door if placed vertically. The hood at its greatest projection must not be less than 2-1/16 inches beyond the inside face of the door. Door slots must be placed not less than 30 inches above the finished floor line.

155.5 Out-of-Bounds Customers. Customers outside city delivery limits may be given delivery service, if they erect boxes on the carrier's regular line of travel. Special delivery, parcel post, insured, certified, COD, and registered mail is delivered to the residences of out-of-bounds customers, if the residences are not more than three blocks from the carrier's line of travel and passable walks are constructed or the street is not impassable; otherwise, a notice is left in the box requesting that the customer call for the mail. If an ordinary parcel is involved and it can be placed in the box, delivery is made in that manner.

155.6 Apartment House Receptacles

155.61 General. Delivery of mail to individual boxes in a residential building containing apartments or units occupied by different addressees, regardless of whether the building is an apartment house, a family hotel, residential units, or business units in a residential area, and regardless of whether the apartments or units are owned or rented, is contingent on the following:

- a. The building contains three or more units with:
 - (1) A common building entrance such as a door, passageway, stairs; or
 - (2) A common street address (some part of the address is shared) approved by local or municipal authorities.
- b. The installation and maintenance of mail receptacles is approved by the USPS.
- c. Each apartment is provided one box, including that of any resident manager or janitor, unless the management has arranged for mail to be delivered at the office or desk for distribution by its employees.
- d. The grouping of the boxes for the building is at a single point readily accessible to the carrier.

Note: The tenant's correct mailing address is the address of the entrance at which the mail receptacles are located, and should include the apartment number or designated mailbox number.

155.62 Exceptions

155.621 Apartment House Complexes. If, however, more than one such building in an apartment house complex has the same approved common street number, delivery of mail to individual boxes is contingent on the grouping of all the boxes for the common street number at a single point readily

accessible to the carrier, even though the boxes serve residents in more than one building.

155.622 Two or More Entrances. If, however, such a building has more than one entrance, delivery of mail to mail receptacles grouped at more than one entrance is contingent on (1) each entrance to which delivery is made serving three or more apartments or flats and (2) the assignment, by local or municipal authorities, of a different street number to each such entrance.

155.63 Mail Receptacles

155.631 Mail Receptacle Responsibility. The purchase, installation, maintenance, and replacement of mail receptacles, boxes, or parcel lockers, are not the responsibility of the USPS, except for neighborhood delivery and collection boxes and parcel lockers authorized by the USPS to be owned and maintained by the USPS.

155.632 Improved Mail Receptacles. Owners and managers of apartment houses, family hotels, flats, or complexes described above equipped with obsolete apartment house mail receptacles, should install up-to-date receptacles approved by the USPS for adequate protection of the mail. When such buildings are substantially renovated, or remodeled to provide additional apartments, or a material change is made in the location of boxes, obsolete receptacles must be replaced by approved receptacles.

155.64 Installation, Specifications, and Approval. The conditions requiring installation of receptacles, specifications for construction, installation procedures, and approval procedures for manufacturers are covered in Publication 17, *Apartment House Mail Receptacles—Regulations and Manufacturing Standards*.

156 Rural Service

156.1 Rural Stations and Branches

156.11 Establishment. Rural stations and branches are established and maintained in communities where a considerable number of people would be seriously inconvenienced if required to transact postal business with rural or highway contract carriers only, and where it is determined to be inadvisable to establish an independent post office.

156.12 Functions

156.121 Rural Stations and Branches. Personnel at rural stations and branches accept, dispatch, receive, and deliver mail (including registered, insured, COD, and certified mail), issue money orders, and sell stamps and stamped paper.

156.122 Nonpersonnel Rural Units. Nonpersonnel rural units are self-service units that furnish essential mail services, such as the collection and delivery of

ordinary mail and sale of stamps. Services such as the sale of money orders and the acceptance and delivery of certified, insured, registered, and COD mail are provided by rural carriers at the time they service these units. Carriers must remain at the unit at least 15 minutes each day their routes are scheduled to operate, to provide customers with the services not otherwise available from the unit.

156.13 Hours. Rural stations and branches are open during the ordinary business hours of each weekday, except national holidays.

156.14 Treatment of Mail. Mail addressed to a rural station or branch is kept there to be called for, unless the addressee is a customer of a rural route starting from the rural station or of an adjoining route; in which case, the mail is delivered to the customer's box by the carrier. Mail addressed to a nonpersonnel rural unit is placed in the addressee's post office box at the unit.

156.2 Delivery Routes

156.21 Establishment. A petition signed by the heads of families wanting establishment of a rural route should be submitted to the postmaster of the post office from which delivery service is wanted, or to the USPS. Form 4027 may be obtained from the postmaster for this purpose. The general rule is that a newly established route should serve an average of at least one family per mile. Unusual conditions such as volume and type of mail are considered. On routes of less than 10 miles, an average of at least six families per mile should be eligible for service before a route is established.

156.22 Extensions. Requests or petitions for extensions of rural routes should be submitted to the postmaster of the office from which the route operates. Form 4027 is available from the postmaster for these requests. Extensions should ordinarily serve an average of at least one family per mile of additional travel, including retrace. Other factors, such as financial transactions and type and volume of mail, are considered. Roads generally should be public, must be kept in good condition, and be passable for vehicles year-round. If an extension is proposed over a road not maintained by road authorities, the postmaster must obtain and submit with Form 4027 a letter from the person responsible for maintaining the road that it will be kept passable at all times. This letter should include the statement "It is understood that, if the road is not properly maintained, rural delivery service will be withdrawn." Rural mail delivery may be extended to families at noncity-delivery offices of the first-, second-, and third-class who reside outside a .25-mile radius of the post office, if such service is requested and the other requirements are met. For extensions to mobile home, trailer, and recreational vehicle parks, see 155.251 and 155.252.

156.23 Road Conditions. Rural delivery service is not established over roads that are not kept in good condition, that are obstructed by gates, or that cross unbridged streams not fordable at all seasons of the year.

156.24 Travel Obstructions. Customers and officials in charge of highways are notified on Form 4024 of road conditions obstructing the delivery of mail. If repairs are not made promptly, service is withdrawn.

156.25 Multiple Routes. In rural areas, a customer living on a road traveled by two or more rural carriers may select the carrier by whom he or she prefers to have his or her mail delivered and collected; in which case, only the designated carrier handles the customer's mail. Unless selection is made by the customer, each carrier passing the box delivers mail to it and collects from it any mail that the carrier can expedite in dispatch or delivery, if the box is on the right-hand side of the road as traveled by the carrier. In suburban or congested areas, the postmaster designates the route that provides service.

156.26 Highway Contract Delivery. Persons residing on roads traveled by both rural and highway contract carriers may qualify as customers of either or both routes. If one curbside mailbox is used for both routes, it must be an approved receptacle (see 151.5).

156.27 Hardship Cases

156.271 Exception. Postmasters may consider a temporary exception to the type of rural delivery authorized for a customer when service by existing methods imposes an extreme physical hardship on that customer. A written request by the customer for an exception to the delivery method must be submitted to the postmaster. An exception to the authorized method of delivery can be granted under hardship criteria if made within the guidelines of current delivery extension policy under this section. Postmasters must base their decision on humanitarian rather than strictly economic grounds. The request must not be denied solely because operational costs may increase or a family member or other party may be available to receive mail for the customer.

156.272 Request Denial. If, after a review, a postmaster decides that a request should be denied, the request and the postmaster's written decision must be sent to the postmaster's district for review. If the district disagrees with the denial, the postmaster is notified to grant the change in service. If the district manager concurs with the denial, the request and the manager's written decision must be sent to the area manager, who makes the final decision and notifies the postmaster and the district manager.

156.273 Restoration of Existing Service. If a customer no longer requires a type of rural service different from the normal service established for a

particular area, the postmaster must restore the mail service to the mode of delivery in effect for that area.

156.3 Carrier Service

156.31 Availability

156.311 On Line of Travel. Rural carrier service is provided to persons who erect approved boxes on the line of travel of the rural carrier, and to persons for whom approved neighborhood delivery and collection boxes and parcel lockers are erected and maintained by the USPS on the carrier's line of travel, but no rural carrier service may be provided to persons residing within city delivery limits.

156.312 Approved Boxes. Normally, rural carriers provide delivery to approved boxes as outlined in 156.54. However, in apartment houses and other multiple dwellings that use or qualify to use apartment house receptacles under 155.6, carriers dismount to serve those receptacles.

156.32 To Residence. Rural carriers deliver registered, certified, numbered insured, COD, Express Mail, and special delivery mail to a customer's residence if it is not more than 1/2 mile from the route and the road leading to it is passable. Unnumbered insured mail is delivered in the same manner as ordinary mail. This same service is accorded customers of rural stations and branches and rural nonpersonnel units.

156.33 Parcel Delivery. When an ordinary parcel too large to be delivered into the customer's box is received, the carrier leaves a notice on Form 3849 in the box requesting the customer to show the date on which he or she can meet the carrier to receive the parcel. If the addressee has filed a written order that the USPS and carriers are relieved of all responsibility in case of loss or depredation when large parcels are placed outside boxes, the carrier delivers large parcels outside the box. If a customer lives within hailing distance of a route, the carrier must make a reasonable effort to hail the customer so he or she can come to the box to receive the parcel before it is left outside the box.

156.34 Contagious Disease. A rural carrier delivers mail to the box of a customer if a quarantined disease exists, when this can be done without exposure to contagion. No mail is collected from such box while the quarantine is in force.

156.35 Service Withdrawal. Service must not be withdrawn from any box without authority from the area manager, customer services, except that postmasters may withdraw service if a customer continues to provide a nonconforming box after notification.

156.4 Postage Payment

156.41 Mail Acceptance

156.411 Postage or Money Furnished. A rural carrier must accept any mailable matter, if postage is fully prepaid or money equal to the required postage is furnished, unless the purpose of handing mail to the carrier for deposit into one office is to "boycott" another office or deprive it of legitimate revenue. During December, customers are required to affix stamps to all greeting cards and letter mail.

156.412 Carrier Affixing Postage. When a rural carrier finds unstamped mail in a customer's box and the required amount of money for postage, the carrier normally collects the mail and money and affixes the necessary postage. The carrier has stamps, stamped envelopes, and postal cards for sale. For convenience and safety, customers who leave mail and money in rural boxes to be collected by the carrier should either wrap the money, place it in a coin-holding receptacle, or attach it to the mail by a clip or other fastener. Money left in rural boxes is left at the customer's risk.

156.42 Postage Uncertain. When mail is given to a rural carrier for mailing and the carrier is unable to determine the postage, the carrier accepts from the sender an amount sufficient to ensure full payment of postage. On the next trip, the carrier must return any excess money to the sender.

156.43 Insufficient Postage. When mailable matter is deposited in a box and the required postage is not paid nor enough money left to buy stamps, the rural carrier, when the identity of the sender is known, places in the box a notice that such matter cannot be dispatched until the necessary postage is paid. If the identity of the sender is unknown, the matter is taken to the post office and treated as unpaid mail.

156.44 No Postage. When mailable matter without postage is found in, placed on, attached to, supported by, or hung from rural mailboxes, the procedures in 146.2 must be followed.

156.5 Rural Mailboxes. Specifications for rural mailboxes and their installation, location, and use are in 151.5.

157 Highway Contract Service

157.1 Description. Highway contract route service provides for the transportation of mail between post offices or other designated points where mail is received or dispatched. Box delivery, collection service, and other mail services are also provided on many routes. Every highway contract route carrier must accept any mail matter presented if properly prepaid by stamps, and deliver it for mailing at the next post office at which he or she arrives.

157.2 Establishment

157.21 New Service. Contracts for regular service are awarded after public advertisements. Temporary service may be established on short notice without advertising. Requests or petitions for new routes should be addressed to the distribution networks office (DNO) manager with supervision over the transportation of mail in the area involved.

157.22 Changes. Changes in line of travel, extensions of service, and schedules may be ordered by the DNO manager at any time. Requests for changes and extensions should be addressed to that manager.

157.3 Box Delivery and Collection

157.31 Service Required. Highway contract route advertisements and contracts state whether box delivery, collection service, or other mail services are required, and specify the area to be served. In addition to usual box delivery and collection service on some routes, the carriers are required to do the following:

- a. Sell stamp supplies.
- b. Deliver registered, insured, certified, COD, and Express Mail.
- c. Accept matter presented by customers to be registered, insured, certified, or mailed COD.
- d. Accept money with applications for money orders and give receipts.

157.32 Availability. Contract route box delivery and collection service is provided without charge to customers who:

- a. Are not eligible for city carrier service;
- b. Reside on or near a route on which box delivery and collection service is required; or
- c. Either erect a curbside mailbox approved under 151.5 on the highway contract route carrier's existing line of travel or are authorized to receive delivery through neighborhood delivery and collection box units and parcel lockers owned and maintained by the USPS.

Note: Contract route delivery and collection service is also provided to persons at hotels, motels, other institutions, and mobile home, trailer, or recreational vehicle parks under 153.6 and 155.25.

- d. Request, from the post office to which mail is addressed, delivery and collection service on Form 5431. Highway contract route customers residing between two post offices may receive mail service from the post office that is the one next preceding the customer's residence, or from either post office, if there is a return trip. In addition, the customer may receive delivery from the post office from which the highway contract route originates.

157.33 Mail Delivery. Mail matter addressed to a qualified customer of a highway contract route is taken by the carrier from the post office and deposited into the proper mailbox. If required by the contract, the carrier delivers registered, certified, insured, COD, and Express Mail. Delivery of this mail is made to the customer's residence if it is not more than 1/2 mile from the route and the road leading to it is passable. The carrier dismounts when necessary to transact business involving the above classes of mail. Parcel post packages too large to go into boxes may be delivered to outside boxes, if the addressee files with the postmaster a written request for delivery in that manner. Otherwise, a notice is left in the customer's box to meet the carrier on the next trip. If delivery cannot be made by carrier, the mail is held at the post office.

157.34 Mail Collection. Mail matter properly stamped and placed in a mailbox for dispatch is collected by the carrier and deposited in the next post office at which the carrier arrives, unless otherwise directed by the USPS. Mail collected on the route, addressed for delivery on that part of the route still to be covered before reaching the next post office, is delivered on the day of collection. The carrier cancels the stamps before delivery by writing across them the name of the post office last served, the state, the date, and the number of the route. Bulky mailable matter, properly prepared and stamped, is collected by the carrier, if placed on or near the box. Money left in mailboxes for the purchase of stamps is left at the customer's risk.

157.4 Mailbox Location. Approved curbside mailboxes (see 151.5) must be placed where they protect the mail and can be conveniently served by carriers without leaving their vehicles. These boxes must be on the right side of the road in the direction of travel, when required by traffic conditions or when driving to the left to reach the boxes would constitute a violation of traffic laws by the carrier.

157.5 Postmaster Duties. Postmasters must:

- a. Withhold delivery of registered, insured, certified, and COD mail to the carrier, unless the contract requires that the carrier deliver such mail.
- b. Not deliver mail to the carrier outside of the regular lock pouch before it has reached the post office to which it is addressed.

157.6 Carrier Duties. If the contract requires that the carrier carry his or her mail, the carrier must:

- a. Accept mail addressed to customers of the route, from the postmaster, and arrange it in order of delivery.
- b. Prepare and keep a list of the names of the customers served, arranged in alphabetical order with the box number opposite each name.

- c. Mark up and forward mail for customers on his or her route who have filed change-of-address orders, and make the proper entries in the roster book.

157.7 Sale of Stamps and Stamp Supplies. If the contract requires the carrier to sell stamps and stamp supplies, a fixed credit is provided by the postmaster at the head of the route. Where the carrier serves customers who receive mail through other offices on the route, the carrier replenishes his or her fixed credit at those offices in amounts representing sales made by him or her to customers served through these offices.

158 Mail Claim Check System

158.1 General

158.11 Purpose. The Mail Claim Check System is a system for notifying customers of the arrival of mail and for obtaining receipts for delivered mail. The system is designed primarily for handling mail intended for carrier delivery, but is also used for mail addressed to post office boxes or general delivery.

158.12 Scope

158.121 Notice of Arrival and Claim. The system uses a form that serves both as a notice of arrival and a claim check for accountable mail, special delivery mail, and for articles that cannot be immediately delivered. It also serves as a delivery receipt for registered, numbered insured, or certified mail.

158.122 Definition of Carrier. For these instructions, the term "carrier" includes special delivery messengers, Motor Vehicle Service (MVS) drivers, and carriers serving city, rural, and all other types of carrier delivery routes. Also, the term "post office box" includes call service and detached post office box service.

158.123 Use. The system is used when mail intended for delivery by carrier is held for redelivery or customer pickup. It also applies to post office box and general delivery mail.

158.124 Post Office Box or General Delivery. The system is not used for mail intended for post office box or general delivery, if a separate storage area is provided for this type of mail. It is not used at installations that provide only post office box and/or general delivery service.

158.2 Use

158.21 Forms

158.211 Form 3849. The required form for the mail claim check system is Form 3849, which has the following five uses:

- a. Delivery receipt for registered, numbered insured, or certified articles.

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